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Lifestyle choices
matter C1

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2024

PROUDLY CALGARY SINCE 1883

POSTMEDIA

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City lifts all water restrictions

Officials confident major feeder main can meet normal demand after repairs

STEVEN WILHELM

Calgary is now able to return to regular water use after weeks of restrictions while a crucial feeder main was off-line for repairs.

Sunday marked the end of the second round of Stage 4 outdoor water restrictions, which were re-introduced on Aug. 26 when the city began repairing 21 spots identified in July.

The saga first began on June 5 when the Bearspaw south feeder main burst, a catastrophe that crippled Calgary's water supply until initial repairs were complete about a month later.

"After around the clock repair by construction crews together with the city's water team we are lifting all water restrictions immediately," said Mayor Jyoti Gondek on Sunday morning.

With the feeder main back in service, the city is now confident it can meet normal water demand, according to capital priorities and investment director Francois Bouchart.

"You may also notice cloudy water or chlorine smell in your water over the next few days," Bouchart said. This water remains safe to drink, he said.

Gondek, meanwhile, thanked the workers who completed the repairs, as well as Calgarians for saving water.

"The level of collaboration that we have seen since June 5 is the reason that we've been able to get through two significant rounds of work," she said.

"Whether you turned off the shower while you were soaping up or only did full loads of laundry, every litre saved reduced pressure on our water system."

There are two smaller sections of pipe to repair in October and November along Memorial Drive and Parkdale, which Bouchart said are smaller and won't require citywide restrictions.

SEE RESTRICTIONS ON A2



A temporary memorial to residential school survivors and lost children sits on the steps of city hall on Sunday. Council will receive an update on a planned permanent memorial during Monday's meeting. GAVIN YOUNG

Residential schools memorial on agenda for council's Indigenous-focused meeting

STEVEN WILHELM

Calgary city council is expected to receive several Indigenous-focused recommendations and updates from administration on Monday.

The agenda includes an update on the permanent memorial for residential school survivors, which is expected to be complete in the third quarter of 2025.

On Sept. 30, 2023, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, the city announced officially that The Confluence (previously Fort Calgary) would become home to a permanent residential school memorial — the top choice among the Indigenous people consulted.

A permanent memorial was first conceptualized after the potential remains of 200 children were found at a former residential

school near Kamloops, B.C.; currently, a temporary memorial sits on the steps of city hall.

"The City seeks to establish a permanent memorial which will commemorate all Indian Residential School survivors, day school survivors, lost children, and inter-generational trauma survivors," read part of a report on the agenda for Monday.

SEE COUNCIL ON A4

FP

BUDGETING

Families
juggle rising
costs of youth
activities NP7

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WEATHER

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Mayor Jyoti Gondek says construction crews worked “around the clock” to complete repairs to the Bearspaw water feeder main. Sunday marked the end of the second round of Stage 4 outdoor water restrictions, which were introduced on Aug. 26. *DARREN MAKOWICHUK FILES*

Latest repairs expected to cost city \$15M-\$20M

RESTRICTIONS FROM A1

“We still have some work to do, but it will be far less impactful to daily life,” he said.

“We can isolate these sections while keeping the feeder main running.”

David Duckworth, the city’s chief administrative officer reiterated that the first round of repairs in July, including the five hot spots identified, cost an estimated \$20 million to \$25 million.

“We have been able to better manage the cost of these recent (Aug. 26) repairs, although much bigger in scope than the work that was completed in June, because they were planned rather than an emergency,” Duckworth said.

They are still waiting for all the invoices, but the repairs to the latest 21 spots are estimated to cost \$15 million to \$20 million, according to Duckworth.

He said that by the end of October, they expect to receive a detailed “forensic report” from consultants with soil and structural analysis of the feeder main.

“We also engaged a consultant to develop a fulsome report that will outline recommendations for the medium and long-term rehabilitation strategies for the Bearspaw south feeder main.”

‘WE ARE 100 PER CENT ACCOUNTABLE’: OFFICIAL

Bouchart said when it came to the course of work on the feeder main, there is a lot that’s been learned.

“Part of that is learning how to operate our system differently when we do have one of these failures,” Bouchart explained.

“It’s extremely important for us to be resilient to failures within the system.”

He said they’ve also learned a lot about repairs to this type of pipe.

“We’ve learned how to work with our community when there’s a call

We’ve learned how to work with our community when there’s a call for water restrictions.

for water restrictions,” Bouchart said.

City officials have previously promised an independent review of the feeder main rupture and response, which is still underway, according to Duckworth.

“I would like to make it clear; we are 100 per cent accountable to Calgarians,” Duckworth said. “There are still many questions that Calgarians have that still need to be answered.”

Findings or recommendations from the independent third-party review, in tandem with the city’s own forensic analysis, will answer those questions, he said.

Jasper lodge to reopen to guests next month

ZAC DELANEY

After months of closure due to wildfire, the Jasper Park Lodge will be welcoming guests back to the resort on Oct. 1.

With tourism interwoven in the fabric of the community and its economy, the Jasper Park Lodge reopening shows signs of hope for the town as it rebuilds.

When the lodge reopens, it will have been more than two months since its closure, as the July 22 wildfire forced the mountain municipality to institute a mandatory evacuation order.

Just two days later, news circulated that the fire had reached the JPL grounds, but the fate of the historic hotel was clarified by July 25, when it announced that although the grounds had sustained damage from the fire, the main lodge and many of the resort’s structures were still intact. A third of the structures in the Town of Jasper weren’t so fortunate.

Fairmont regional director of public relations, Anastasia Mar-

tin-Stilwell said in an email that bookings are now open for travellers to stay at the lodge starting Oct. 1, but that it would be remaining at reduced capacity for the immediate future.

The JPL thanked first responders, Parks Canada and the Municipality of Jasper for their “unwavering” dedication to the community and said that reopening wouldn’t be possible without them and as such it would support the rebuilding efforts.

“We are honoured to give back to the Jasper community by contributing 100 per cent of the resort fee from all October 2024 guest room bookings toward local rebuilding efforts,” said Martin-Stilwell in an email.

Despite the reduced capacity, guests will still have full access to the Emerald Lounge, the Great Hall, canoeing on Lac Beauvert and the Fairmont Spa. The resort is also set to bring back its Symphony Under the Stars on Oct. 19, which it said will be a benefit for the community.



While Jasper Park Lodge is reopening next week, it will be at reduced capacity for some time. *FAIRMONT HOTELS/THE CANADIAN PRESS*

Lethbridge exhibition credits improving finances for lower deficit projection

STEPHEN TIPPER

The Lethbridge and District Exhibition’s finances have improved since the beginning of the year, but the organization that runs the southern Alberta city’s Agri-food Hub and Trade Centre still figures to run a multimillion-dollar deficit by the end of its fiscal year.

The 268,000-square-foot, \$77-million facility, which sits on land owned by the City of Lethbridge, opened in August 2023 and features banquet salons, four meeting rooms and outdoor patio areas.

Within months of opening, the LDE requested a financial lifeline to keep the facility running. Former CEO Mike Warkentin said in December 2023 inflation, interest rates, supply chain issues and after-effects from the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to the exhibition’s financial situation.

The exhibition had projected a deficit of roughly \$6.4 million for

the current fiscal year before a new management structure, approved by the Alberta government in January, was put in place. The former board resigned and a new board of directors, which includes City of Lethbridge and Lethbridge County senior administrators, was appointed with the task of creating a viable business model and governance structure for the organization.

The LDE’s business model came under scrutiny in December, when the Alberta government — which contributed \$27.8 million toward the Agri-food Hub and Trade Centre — cast doubts over it when declining to provide \$1 million in emergency support to the organization.

In its latest financial update to Lethbridge council, the LDE now predicts its deficit to be \$3.26 million for its current fiscal year, which ends Oct. 31.

“As a city council, we know we have some important decisions ahead regarding the budget for

LDE,” said Lethbridge Mayor Blaine Hyggen in a statement earlier this week. “But we are encouraged by the good work we’ve seen so far to reduce the deficit.”

The City of Lethbridge has contributed \$6.1 million in funding to the exhibition, including \$5 million in operating and capital grants for its current fiscal year, \$300,000 for an independent third-party review of the LDE and the Agri-Food Hub and Trade Centre project, and \$850,000 for city resourcing requirements.

During Tuesday’s council meeting, a councillor asked if the exhibition has received any rental inquiries at the older facilities — which include four old pavilions — to offset its costs.

Acting LDE CEO Kim Gallucci replied the Spirit Halloween is now renting space in one of the old pavilions, but their physical condition is a problem for the organization.

“We are proposing to maybe not renting them at all and winding

down those old pavilions entirely,” said Gallucci.

He added the organization would likely save more money by shutting them down than renting them and then having to fix any maintenance issues that could crop up.

During Tuesday’s discussion with council, Gallucci assured deputy mayor Jeff Carlson that the new renter was not receiving a subsidized rental rate.

“We definitely weren’t their first choice. We’re probably down the line quite a bit, but in that case it wasn’t really competition,” said Gallucci.

But running the exhibition, originally formed as the Lethbridge and District Agricultural Society in 1897, “isn’t just dollars and cents,” he said.

“It supports a lot of community events, it supports a lot of activities around agriculture.”

Events like its farmers market “aren’t really money generators” but rather “community initiatives that help bring people together, farm to table, that type of thing,” said the exhibition’s acting CEO.

In a news release, Gallucci says the LDE team has booked 15 more events to the 2024 schedule, six new 2025 events, and the Alberta Fire Chiefs Conference in 2028.



GAVIN YOUNG

UP IN FLAMES Visitors check out the Prairie Fire sculpture at TELUS Spark during Beakerhead, the annual showcase that puts science, engineering, art and technology in the spotlight.

Aid worker prepares for third winter of war

Calgary resident delivers medicine and food to civilians near the front lines in Ukraine

BILL KAUFMANN

Paul Hughes figures the Russian missile a few days ago struck about 500 metres from his workplace in Kharkiv.

“It’s pretty random,” said the Calgary humanitarian aid worker.

It’s a danger that’s become second nature to Hughes and won’t deter him from heading into a third winter in war-ravaged Ukraine, where he’s helping civilians enduring their country’s seemingly endless agony.

“It’s coming up to my third year, I can’t even believe it but we keep contributing and people keep on supporting us,” said Hughes, 60, during a video interview.

“There’s probably only 50 foreign aid volunteers left in the whole city.”

Since arriving in the country in the late winter of 2022, Hughes’ Calgary-based group Helping Ukraine-Grassroots Support (HUGS) has run nearly 350 missions delivering all manner of humanitarian goods and medicine to the war’s victims — and evacuating them.

In the summer of 2022, Hughes’ son Mac, 21, left a construction job in Calgary to join him in Ukraine and help with aid work. He, too, remains in the country, most recently helping clean up and salvage the remains of homes struck by Russian artillery or rockets in the southern city of Kherson.

The group operates out of a garage in northern Kharkiv, the country’s second-largest city that sits only 40 kilometres from the Russian border.

The city the size of Calgary hosts about 300,000 Ukrainians displaced by the war. Its streets are prowled by military vehicles bristling with electronic drone-jamming apparatus “that make them look like alien vehicles,” said Hughes.

Last summer, Russian forces launched an offensive towards the city that’s been stymied by Ukrainian troops, but Hughes said he can sometimes hear fighting that continues north of Kharkiv.

“It was a huge artillery duel,” he says of a recent rumbling clearly audible from where he organizes aid missions.

On one wall of the HUGS garage is a maroon flag from Hughes’ old



Paul Hughes and his son Mac are pictured in Kharkiv, Ukraine last month. The two provide humanitarian aid in the war-torn country.

PAUL HUGHES

military unit, the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry, that’s flanked by Ukrainian colours.

A group of aid workers sit at a table awaiting their next mission or delivery of supplies while an older dog paces the cement floor.

Near them, a black backpack or “strike bag” containing emergency necessities in case of an artillery hit sits next to an orange medical case.

The space is also used to repair vehicles that deliver aid to outlying, war-ravaged areas.

In one of those zones near the town of Pokrovsk, which has become a prime objective of a grinding Russian offensive, Hughes said a female Canadian volunteer was recently injured.

“But they still managed to get nine civilians out of there,” he said.

The previous week, Hughes said, he made a delivery foray into areas southeast of Kharkiv that are either in the path of the Russian advance or under bombardment.

In a scattering of villages, some of the inhabitants refuse to leave their homes, many of them elderly human scarecrows, he said.

“People live in basements. There’s a lot of people in really dangerous situations but they will not leave — there’s no mandatory evacuation,” said Hughes, 60.

“The elderly are just hanging on and look really worn. There aren’t a lot of smiles.”

His team brings them food and fresh water — the latter in dire demand due to the actions of the Russians, he said.

“The Russians have damaged the water systems, wells ... there’s not much of an effort to repair things near the front line.”

The fighting not far from those villages has left a tension among aid workers, soldiers and civilians alike, said the Calgarian.

“If (the Russians) break through there, it gets really tough, it’s pretty dicey,” he said.

Even so, the Ukrainians remain grimly determined to fight on, he said, as shown by their troops’ recent foray into Russia’s Kursk region, not far to the northwest of Kharkiv.

Hughes said he knows some of soldiers serving there.

“They say there’s a lot of heavy fighting going on and that the Russian civilians seem to like them, though that might be the case for whichever side is winning at the time,” he said.

As for Ukrainian civilians facing another winter of energy shortages amid Russian drone and missile strikes on the country’s power infrastructure, Hughes said HUGS is focused on supplying much-needed generators and even wood stoves, along with the always-needed medical supplies that includes wheelchairs and crutches.

Collaborators in Western Canada are seeking to secure a 40-foot sea can to fill with the items and ship to Ukraine in the coming months to ease the pain of another winter of war, he said.

Allan Reid, who oversees veterans’ food banks in Alberta and B.C., said he’s hoping to fill the container over the next month and ship it to Poland.

“We already have transport in place to get it across the border (to Ukraine),” said Reid, who hopes to also collect laptops for students, some of whom have lost their schools to the war.

“It’s heart-wrenching what they’ve had to go through.”

Anyone interested in donating can call Reid at 403-471-9851.

As for how long he’ll remain in Ukraine, it depends on the whims of war, said Hughes.

“I’ll be here until the war is over,” he said.

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Old school gets new life as child-care space

NOAH BRENNAN

A century-old school building in Calgary’s Bridgeland-Riverside neighbourhood is being transformed into an after-school child-care space, easing years of uncertainty over the historic property’s future.

The 104-year-old arts and crafts style building — located near 1st Avenue and 6th Street N.E. — has sat empty for roughly 15 years. The City of Calgary declined a previous proposal to buy the site from the Calgary Board of Education, raising fears within the community around the building’s fate in the event of a private sale.

A Calgary-based child-care operator is now leasing the space from the school board for a new location set to open Oct. 1.

Wee Wild Ones founder and CEO Chloe Dusser said she’s “excited and proud” of her company’s partnership with the public school board.

“This felt like a perfect fit — to provide much-needed after-school care and bring purpose to the building,” she says of the partnership.

“I’m a huge advocate for not demolishing buildings ... and using what we have,” she adds. “Nothing needs to be shiny and new.”

Renovations on the building’s interior started last September and left the building’s original design, layout and essence intact, Dusser says.

The child-care operator worked closely with the city during the permitting process, Dusser says, to bring the building up to code while preserving as much of the interior as possible.

“There’s even ... some of the original doors, a lot of the original chalkboards and all of the original moulding,” she says of the preserva-

tion efforts. “It was a really exciting project.”

In an emailed statement, the CBE said its intention was to find a new purpose for the building after determining it had no use for the site. Having a child-care operator take over the space seemed like “a natural consideration,” the school board said. “It will benefit families at our nearby Riverside School, as well as the community in general.”

Community members who previously expressed concerns about the building’s future were pleased to hear about the most recent development in the schoolhouse saga.

“The Riverside Bungalow is a real landmark in our community,” says Deb Lee, heritage director on the board of the Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association. “We’ve been concerned about it over the years, just kind of sitting there.”

Lee’s concerns mounted after the city declined to buy the building.

“We weren’t sure who was going to buy that school building and whether they would save it or not,” she explains, adding she has “nothing but positive things to say” about Dusser moving into the space. “It’s amazing what Chloe has done and intends to do with (the building).”

After years spent advocating to preserve the building, Heritage Calgary executive director Josh Traptow also expressed support for the move.

“I think it’s a very positive development,” Traptow says. “Bridgeland-Riverside is getting much-needed daycare and a heritage building is having a new lease on life through adaptive reuse.”

While listed on the city’s Inventory of Evaluated Historic Resources, the building is not a legally protected as a designated municipal heritage site.



A 104-year-old school building in Calgary’s Bridgeland-Riverside neighbourhood is being transformed into an after-school daycare after sitting empty for 15 years. **NOAH BRENNAN**



The sale of two West Canadian Digital Imaging divisions to Ontario-based Cober Solutions is “a great move,” says George Brookman, WCD chair, left, pictured with Karen Brookman, WCD president and CEO, and Todd Cober, Cober Solutions president. WEST CANADIAN DIGITAL IMAGING

ONTARIO FIRM GAINS Foothold IN WEST WITH ACQUISITION OF TWO WCD DIVISIONS



DAVID PARKER
Around Town

Cober Solutions, with headquarters in Kitchener, Ont., has acquired the digital print and wide format signage division of West Canadian Digital Imaging (WCD). The new relationship marks a significant milestone in Cober’s 110-year history, and having plants in Calgary and Edmonton will significantly reduce emissions produced through its current cross-country shipping.

“We are thrilled to welcome WCD’s print and signage teams into the Cober family,” says president Todd Cober. “WCD’s exceptional talent and production capabilities will further enhance our ability to support our national customers, and we are truly excited for this next chapter of growth.”

“I would also like to thank the Brookman family. I am very cognizant as to how much this portion of the business means to them and I do not take the trust they are putting into the Cober team lightly.”

Karen Brookman, president and CEO of WCD, says: “This is

a notable moment in the history of WCD, in Cober we found the perfect company with shared values and culture to take the deeply valued and long-standing print and signage divisions of our company to a new level.”

WCD is retaining its managed service company that specializes in managing businesses by providing people, processes and technology on-site to improve efficiency in the workplace. Its teams handle non-core functions such as managing high printing demands or complex print solutions. Brookman says it will also continue to provide clients with design solutions through its WCD Creative Services, but printing will be passed on to the new Cober entity, a good example of how the two companies will work together.

WCD could be one of Cober’s biggest customers.

Shared values and culture were important to both ownerships during negotiations. Both are multi-generational family companies that care about the communities they work in.

Cober was founded by Cober’s great grandfather in 1916. WCD traces its history here back to 1952 and was purchased by Brookman’s father, George — now acting as chair and company ambassador. Her sister, Jennifer, is vice-president of sales and marketing.

The two companies also share complementary operational processes, workflows, equipment and technology, enabling a fully integrated, streamlined fulfilment offering to partners around the globe, including large e-commerce brands as well as national commercial print customers.

George Brookman is excited about the future of his company. “Great move for WCD,” he said. “Forty years ago, West Canadian was a blueprint and photofinishing company, today we are a fully digital document and managed service organization. By the sale of our print and signage production to Cober, we open up opportunities for our customers, our employees and for WCD on a national basis.”

E-commerce, on-demand consumer printing has been a huge part of the business volume of both companies; it is an ever-growing division, which is one reason Cober is currently expanding its Kitchener plant by 100,000 square feet. It also has a large plant in Barrie, Ont.

In Calgary, the company will continue to work out of WCD’s 9th Avenue S.E. plant and offices, alongside the Brookmans and their staff. Seventy-eight of those will now be working for Cober, while the rest of its 175 employees will remain in the Calgary head office and in its busy

Edmonton location.

Karen Brookman says the announcement marks a pivotal milestone in WCD’s journey and a critical next step in realizing its vision to be a technology-led managed service company.

“As WCD moves forward, we will be focusing on emerging technology and innovative solutions with the added benefit of leveraging Cober’s newly established national footprint with world-class capability and increased capacity. This is a strategic opportunity that truly benefits all parties involved.”

Notes: Neuron Mobility, Canada’s leading e-scooter operator, says Calgary is an incredible city for micromobility. The company first launched e-scooters in Calgary in the summer of 2021, and since then they have been embraced by riders. Neuron has chosen this city to launch its all-new N4 e-scooter. An initial 250 of the safety-orange N4 model will gradually replace its current models in Calgary. Designed in-house, it boasts unparalleled comfort and stability, with smoother and more predictable acceleration, better hill climbing ability, indicators, suspension and a larger and smarter dashboard — even a phone holder.

David Parker appears regularly in the Herald. Read his columns online at calgaryherald.com/business. He can be reached at 403-830-4622.

Researchers take high-tech approach to monitoring health of bison herds

ZAC DELANEY

A project created through a collaboration between NAIT and Lakeland College is shifting the methods researchers use to study bison.

In a field at Irish Creek Bison Ltd., roughly 200 kilometres east of Edmonton, sits the recently constructed BisonSense, a platform equipped with a series of cameras and sensors that has begun regularly tracking the health of the operation’s bison herd.

BisonSense was the brainchild of Yuri Montanholi, a research scientist and instructor at Lakeland College and also the lead organizer on the project. Montanholi teamed up with NAIT’s Quamrul Huda, the JR Shaw Research Chair for industrial automation, who spearheaded a technical team to bring Montanholi’s vision to life.

The need for the BisonSense bison monitoring station was born out of a lack of data surrounding bison health during their lives. Montanholi explained that bison

are more sensitive than cattle and get stressed when they’re handled. Some, he said, won’t eat for days after being handled or moved in any way. Bison are often weighed at around seven to nine months, and then once again before going to the slaughterhouse, making for a health profile comprised of just two to three checkups.

“So, this whole period, from childhood to be ready to go to the slaughterhouse, there’s no measurement,” said Montanholi.

Montanholi wanted more data. He applied for funding through Alberta Innovates, which he was awarded, and later received other smaller matching grants to bolster his research, giving him the funding



BisonSense, built collaboratively between Lakeland College and NAIT, is a fully self-sustaining bison monitoring station that provides real time bison biometrics to researchers, who can access the data remotely. NAIT

he needed to pursue the project.

Attracting each individual bison to the monitoring station was the relatively easy part of the project. With strategically placed food and water, the researchers had the capacity to control each animal’s movements while it was scanned in the process. However, being able to get the data they wanted without having to be physically present was a challenge. That’s when NAIT’s Huda got involved.

“We saw it’s a great opportunity where we can contribute, not only on the technical aspect but also something in a new dimension that helps the industry and Alberta industry and economy all together,” said Huda.

“So that was a good win-win for them and for us to come up to this project and work together.”

Huda and his team were responsible for automating the BisonSense, and ensuring that it can operate remotely, while standing up to the harsh Alberta seasonal conditions, let alone the wear and tear from the bulky animal. Huda said that the technology that operates the BisonSense wasn’t particularly new or challenging. Montanholi’s vision to create the BisonSense now and to ensure it could be remotely operated and

Five teams to work on design of memorial

COUNCIL FROM A1

Five Indigenous-led design teams for the memorial are to be announced by the end of October, according to the report.

“It has been a long time coming. I appreciate everyone’s patience as we made sure that we got this memorial right,” said Mayor Jyoti Gondek in September 2023.

Council will also receive the White Goose Flying annual progress report, which will provide updates on the implementation of the Calls to Action by The City and its civic partners.

According to the city, the report is named after an Indigenous student, Jack White Goose Flying, who died in 1899 from tuberculosis while attending the St. Dunstan’s Indian Industrial School.

“While the City has made progress... there is still more it can do to advance Truth and Reconciliation.”

“The annual reports show that while the City has made progress on numerous Calls to Action, there is still more it can do to advance Truth and Reconciliation,” read the report. “Reconciliation is the responsibility of everyone.”

There’s also selecting a site for an Indigenous gathering place, which “administration continues to work towards,” according to the report.

“Administration is supporting the Indigenous Gathering Place Society, exploring possible locations for an Indigenous gathering place near the confluence of the Bow and Elbow rivers,” read a briefing. “This year, the focus has been on assessing the feasibility of developing the Indigenous gathering place at the Indigenous Gathering Place Society identified preferred location.”

Monday’s Indigenous-focused council meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. The public is encouraged to tune in using the city’s livestream. *With files from Hiren Mansukhani and Postmedia News*



The city plans to move the temporary residential school memorial at city hall to a permanent place at The Confluence. GAVIN YOUNG

self-sustaining was the exciting part for Huda.

Much of the tech the team organized was already readily available: proximity sensors, heat cameras, weight scales, etc. Montanholi sourced the products and the technical group wired it in and programmed all of the scanners to work in conjunction with one another. They also set it up with a cloud-based collection software so that as the data is collected, it would be accessible from wherever the researcher is located.

The challenge, Huda said, was ensuring a constant power supply.

“We needed to simulate and calculate and then come up with a hybrid power model, which is a wind generator and solar altogether,” said Huda. “And that is a good outcome of this project because the same outcome can be applied to many other aspects, now that we are trying to get self-sustainable energy and reduce carbon footprint.”

The result was a self-powering data collection station that allows Montanholi to collect and view the data from anywhere.

“You can move that thing anywhere on the planet and put it to work,” said Montanholi.

zdelaney@postmedia.com

AN EDITION OF
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in the CALGARY HERALD

PRIME MINISTER JUSTIN TRUDEAU WILL BE IN NEW YORK THIS WEEK FOR THE 78TH MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE AMID INCREASING GEOPOLITICAL INSTABILITY. [NP3](#)



JACK GUEZ / AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

A member of the Israeli security forces stands guard Sunday inside a cordoned-off area in Kiryat Bialik in Israel's Haifa district, targeted by Lebanon's Hezbollah.

The censors are in charge now

No place for politicians in filmfest dispute



CHRIS SELLEY
Comment

servative immigration minister Chris Alexander ventured on X. “If Ukraine’s only friends were as fair-weather as Canada, the war against fascism would be lost.” (Here’s a reliable rule of Canadian politics: When someone tells you that something “isn’t free speech” ... it’s free speech.) The film I wrote about was Russians at War, Anastasia Trofimova’s grim documentary about Z-branded soldiers on the front lines of Vladimir Putin’s disastrous invasion and occupation of Ukraine. (Let me state here, again, not that it makes any difference, that I am 100 per cent on Ukraine’s side in this war.) And the reaction to those deploring the film’s cancellation — not just mine but Marsha Lederman’s in The Globe and Mail, and Rosie DiManno’s and Andrew Phillips’ in the Toronto Star — has only steeled my resolve in this affair. Censorship is bad. If you need a citation, I would suggest the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. See SELLEY on NP3

HEZBOLLAH DEALT ‘BLOWS IT COULDN’T HAVE IMAGINED’

AKIVA VAN KONINGSVELD

Israel struck Hezbollah in its Beirut stronghold in ways the group never anticipated, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared on Sunday, speaking after an airstrike killed a senior terrorist leader in the city and days after thousands of operatives were wounded in attacks attributed to Jerusalem. “If Hezbollah did not understand the message, I promise you: It will understand the message,” the prime minister said in remarks shared by his office. Israel dealt Hezbollah “a series of blows it couldn’t have imagined,” he said. “We are determined to return our residents to their homes in the north safely. No country can tolerate shooting at its residents,

NETANYAHU, DEFENCE MINISTER VOW TO USE EVERYTHING NECESSARY TO ‘FULFIL THE MISSION’

shooting at its cities, and we — the State of Israel — will not tolerate it either,” Netanyahu said. Israel’s government remains determined to do “everything necessary to restore security” along

the country’s northern border, he added. Earlier on Sunday, Defence Minister Yoav Gallant during a visit to an IAF base said that the Iranian-backed Lebanese terrorist army had begun “to sense some of the capabilities of the Israel Defense Forces. “Our moves will continue until the goal is achieved. We will use everything necessary to fulfil the mission, until we reach a situation where we can return the residents of the north to their homes safely,” he said. Thousands of terrorists were wounded and dozens were killed when their pagers and radio devices exploded across Lebanon on Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively, with Hezbollah immediately blaming the Jewish state’s intelligence agencies for both attacks. See ISRAEL on NP4

Mom of suspect in Georgia school shooting accused of elder abuse

TAPED TO CHAIR

FITZGERALD, GA. • The mother of a Georgia teenager charged with fatally shooting four people at his high school has been indicted in connection with an alleged domestic incident last year. The indictment handed down Monday charges Mar-

cee Gray, 43, with exploiting an elderly person and other crimes in Ben Hill County, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported. It appears unrelated to the school shootings at Apalachee High School, which occurred in a different Georgia county nearly 320 kilometres away. Gray is the mother of 14-year-old Colt Gray, who was charged with murder

after surrendering to police at the high school on Sept. 4. Authorities say the boy brought an assault-style rifle to school in his backpack and opened fire during morning classes, killing two students and two teachers and injuring nine others. The indictment charging Marcee Gray stems from a domestic incident late last year, the Atlanta newspaper

reported. It said a police incident report states Gray’s 74-year-old mother told authorities Nov. 4 that Gray had taken her phone, taped her to a chair and left her for nearly a full day. The incident report said Gray bound her mother before travelling to Barrow County to confront her ex-husband, who lived with their son and two other

children. The Atlanta newspaper said records show Gray was arrested in Barrow County on Nov. 6, two days after her mother was found, and was sentenced to 45 days in jail after pleading guilty to charges of criminal trespassing, using a licence plate to disguise her car and causing property damage. Gray has said she called

her son’s high school the morning of the shootings to warn the staff after Colt Gray sent her a text message saying, “I’m sorry.” Days later, she issued a statement saying her son “is not a monster.” The teenager’s father, Colin Gray, has also been charged with involuntary manslaughter, two counts of second-degree murder and eight counts of cruelty to children. Authorities say he gave his son access to the rifle used in the shootings. The Associated Press

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NEWS

U.S.

AI HELPS SHAPE
ELECTION IN
ABSURD WAYS

WASHINGTON With the 2024 election looming, the first since the mass popularization of generative artificial intelligence, experts feared the worst: social media flooded with AI-generated deepfakes that were so realistic, baffled voters wouldn't know what to believe.

So far, that hasn't happened. Instead, what voters are seeing is far more absurd: A video of former president Donald Trump riding a cat while wielding an assault rifle. A mustachioed Vice President Kamala Harris dressed in communist attire.

Still, eye-catching AI-generated photos and videos, some striving to be funny, have become useful tools for spreading false, sometimes racist messages with a clear political bent.

The Associated Press

ROYALS

KATE IN PUBLIC FOR
FIRST TIME SINCE
END OF CHEMO

LONDON Kate, the Princess of Wales, made her first public appearance Sunday since she announced she had completed chemotherapy and would return to some public duties.

Kate and her husband, Prince William, were seen Sunday attending church with King Charles and Queen Camilla near their royal Balmoral estate in Scotland.

Kate, 42, announced on Sept. 9 that she had completed treatment six months after revealing she had an undisclosed type of cancer. Her announcement came six weeks after Buckingham Palace announced that the King was being treated for cancer.

In a video announcing her progress, she said the path to full recovery would be long and she would take it day by day.

The Associated Press

PORTUGAL

180,000 BIKERS
GET HELMETS
BLESSED AT SHRINE

FATIMA, PORTUGAL An estimated 180,000 motorcyclists gathered Sunday at Our Lady of Fatima shrine in central Portugal for the ninth annual Pilgrimage of the Blessing of Helmets.

Carlos Cabecinhas, the rector of the Sanctuary of Fatima, said the event has steadily increased in prominence — renowned for its conviviality as well as its shows of devotion. This year's turnout was the largest ever.

The pilgrimage is organized by Blessing of Helmets Association and by numerous national and international motorcycle clubs. Various police forces join and support the event.

There were 8,936 motorcycle accidents in Portugal in 2023, resulting in 124 deaths and 766 serious injuries.

The Associated Press



RUDY CAREZZEVOLI / GETTY IMAGES

LEAPING LIZARD FORCES RED FLAG A large lizard scampered onto the track and stopped the third and final Formula 1 practice session for the Singapore Grand Prix on Saturday. The session was briefly red-flagged after Aston Martin driver Fernando Alonso reported over the radio that he'd seen the lizard in the middle of the track. Two track marshals chased the long-tailed reptile and the session resumed shortly after.

Why an Alaska island
is using peanut butter,
black lights to find rats

BECKY BOHRER

in Juneau, Alaska

On an island of windswept tundra in the Bering Sea, hundreds of miles from mainland Alaska, a resident sitting outside their home saw — well, did they see it? They were pretty sure they saw it.

A rat.

The purported sighting would not have gotten attention in many places around the world, but it caused a stir on St. Paul Island, which is part of the Pribilof Islands, a birding haven sometimes called the "Galapagos of the north" for its diversity of life.

That's because rats that stow away on vessels can quickly populate and overrun remote islands, devastat-

ing bird populations by eating eggs, chicks or even adults and upending ecosystems.

Shortly after receiving the resident's report in June, wildlife officials arrived at the apartment complex and crawled through nearby grasses, around the building and under the porch, looking for tracks, chew marks or droppings. They baited traps with peanut butter and set up trail cameras to capture any confirmation of the rat's existence. So far, they've found no evidence.

"We know — because we've seen this on other islands and in other locations in Alaska and across the world — that rats absolutely decimate seabird colonies, so the threat is never one that the community would take lightly," said Lau-

ren Divine, director of the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island's ecosystem conservation office.

The anxiety on St. Paul Island is the latest development amid efforts to get or keep non-native rats off some of the most remote, but ecologically diverse, islands in Alaska and around the world.

Rodents have been removed successfully from hundreds of islands worldwide — including one in Alaska's Aleutian chain formerly known as "Rat Island," according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. But such efforts can take years and cost millions of dollars, so prevention is considered the best defence.

Around the developed areas of St. Paul, officials have set out blocks of wax — "chew blocks" — designed

to record any telltale incisor bites. Some of the blocks are made with ultraviolet material, which allow inspectors armed with black lights to search for glowing droppings.

They've asked residents to be on the lookout for any rodents and are seeking permission to have the U.S. Department of Agriculture bring a dog to the island to sniff out any rats. Canines are otherwise banned from the Pribilofs to protect fur seals.

There have been no traces of any rats since the reported sighting this summer, but the hunt and heightened state of vigilance is likely to persist for months.

The community of about 350 people has long had a rodent surveillance program that includes rat traps near the airport and at developed waterfront areas where vessels arrive, designed to detect or kill any rats that might show up.

Still, it took nearly a year to catch the last known rat on St. Paul, which was believed to have hopped off a barge. It was found dead in 2019 after it evaded the community's initial defences.

The Associated Press

Rhinos on rise
but poaching
is up, too

EVELYNE MUSAMBI

NAIROBI, KENYA • The rhino population across the world has increased slightly but so have the killings, mostly in South Africa, as poaching fed by huge demand for rhino horns remains a top threat, conservationists said in a new report.

The number of white rhinos increased from 15,942 in 2022 to 17,464 in 2023, but the black and greater one-horned rhino stayed the same, according to the report published by the International Rhino Foundation ahead of Sunday's World Rhino Day.

Another subspecies, the northern white rhino, is technically extinct with only two females being kept in a secure private conservancy in Kenya, known as Ol Pejeta. A trial is ongoing to develop embryos in the lab from an egg and sperm previously collected from white rhinos and transferring it into a surrogate female rhino.

A total of 586 rhinos were killed in Africa in 2023, most of them in South Africa — which has the highest population of rhinos at an estimated 16,056. The killings increased from 551 reported in 2022, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

With all five subspecies combined, there are just under 28,000 rhinos left in the world, from 500,000 at the beginning of the 20th century.

Rhinos face various environmental threats, such as habitat loss due to development and climate change, but poaching — based on the belief that their horns have medicinal uses — remains the top threat.

Philip Muruthi, the vice-president for species conservation at the Africa Wildlife Foundation, said protection has played a big role in increasing rhino population. In Kenya, their numbers rose from 380 in 1986 to 1,000 last year, he said. "Why has that happened? Because the rhinos were brought into sanctuaries and were protected."

The Associated Press

Seal marks
50th birthday at
British sanctuary

BRIAN MELLEY

in London

As gray seals go, Sheba is grayer than most.

The grand dame of the Cornish Seal Sanctuary was celebrated Saturday for her 50th birthday, far surpassing the lifespan of a seal in the wild and possibly being the oldest in captivity.

"Reaching 50 is a huge milestone, not just for Sheba but for everyone here who has been part of her journey," said Tamara Cooper, curator at the facility in southwest England.

Things weren't looking bright for the young pup when she was rescued from a Cornwall beach in September 1974.

Ken Jones found Sheba with a head injury and nasty eye infection and took her

home where he and his wife, Mary, rehabilitated seals in a pool.

As Sheba grew up, so did the rescue operation, moving from Jones's backyard to the Helford River in the village of Gweek and expanding to rehabilitate over 70 seal pups a year.

Sheba's condition, including loss of vision, prevented her return to the sea and she's now outlasted all of the other creatures who have come and gone, making her a favourite fixture at the facility.

Sheba's longevity is attributed to the care she's received and advances in veterinary medicine.

Seals typically survive 25 to 30 years in the wild, Cooper said. Females in captivity can live to 40 while males live to about 30.

While Sheba's well-known and well-liked by the public and her handlers, she's not the most cooperative crea-



BARRY WILLIAMS / CORNISH SEAL SANCTUARY VIA AP

Sheba, seen at the Cornish Seal Sanctuary in Gweek, southwest England, may be the oldest in captivity.

ture.

When she was raised by Jones, his focus was on rescue, rehabilitation and release, said Heather Green, an animal care specialist. There was no training for the animals that stayed behind until more recent years.

She has been reluctant to learn new tricks, such as being rolled over for inspections of her belly, flippers, tails and teeth. When it comes to receiving drops for her milky eyes, she does well

some days while on others she waddles her mottled-fur frame away and splashes back into the pool.

"She's a bit stubborn," Green said. "She'd been so used to just being fed and not having to work for her fish that even now she still protests slightly. If we ask her to do any behaviour or something, it's all on her own sweet time and she'll definitely let you know if she's up for training or not."

The Associated Press

AIR CANADA

UNION HEAD SAYS SHE'LL RESIGN IF PILOTS REJECT DEAL

The head of the Air Canada pilots union says she'll step down if members opt not to approve a tentative deal with the airline. Charlene Hudy, who chairs the Air Canada contingent of the Air Line Pilots Association, told her fellow employees in a virtual town hall Friday that she "will have no choice but to resign" if they vote down the would-be agreement. The contract, reached last weekend after more than a year of negotiations, would grant the carrier's 5,400 pilots a wage hike of 42 per cent over four years. *The Canadian Press*



JEAN LEVAC / POSTMEDIA NEWS FILES

Telesat CEO Dan Goldberg has defended a \$2-billion loan from the federal government amid suggestions from the Tories that Elon Musk's Starlink could provide remote communities with broadband internet at a cheaper price.

\$2B loan for satellites has Tories seeking Musk's help

Tech billionaire says he can beat Telesat price

ANJA KARADEGLIJA

OTTAWA • A \$2.14-billion federal loan for an Ottawa-based satellite operator has Canadian politicians arguing about whether American billionaire Elon Musk poses a national security risk.

The fight involves internet connectivity in remote regions as Canada tries to live up to its promise to connect every Canadian household to high-speed internet by 2030.

Telesat CEO Dan Goldberg said "there appear to be some misunderstandings" about the nature of his company's deal with the government.

A week ago, the Liberal government announced the loan to Telesat, which is launching a constellation of low Earth orbit satellites that will be able to connect the most remote areas of the

country to broadband internet.

Conservative MP Michael Barrett objected to the price tag, asking Musk in a social media post how much it would cost to provide his Starlink to every Canadian household that does not have high-speed access.

"Less than half that amount," Musk responded, prompting Barrett to conclude: "That sounds like a common-sense solution for Canada to me."

In an interview, Goldberg rejected the comparison because his company received a loan, not a grant.

Telesat will pay the government nine per cent interest. The Quebec government is also loaning \$400 million. In exchange, Telesat will give up around a 12 per cent equity stake in the company to the two governments.

"No one asked Elon, 'Do you want a \$2-billion loan from the government of Canada at a nine per cent interest rate and give up 10 per cent of Starlink?'" he said. "I think there would have been a very different response."

He noted that a portion of

the loan will actually end up going to Musk's SpaceX because Telesat uses the company to launch satellites.

A spokesperson for Innovation Canada said the new loan replaces a previous \$1.44-billion loan announced in 2021, which did not go ahead. The government is maintaining its commitment to spend \$600 million to buy internet capacity once the system is operational.

The Liberal government has a years-long initiative to ensure all Canadian households are connected to high-speed internet, with the goal of getting to 98 per cent in 2026 and 100 per cent by 2030.

Telesat's launch plans have already been delayed by years. Goldberg said those delays, some of which were related to challenges around COVID-19, are "in the rear view" and the company plans to be fully in service with global coverage by the end of 2027.

After Barrett's exchange with Musk, Innovation Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne accused the Conservatives of wanting to "sell

out our national security."

"When you are in the farther north, you need a reliable network, and you need sovereignty and resiliency in the network. So to suggest otherwise to me is a bit crazy."

In a statement, the Conservatives stuck to their argument that Musk would be a better bet.

In announcing the loan, the Prime Minister's Office said Telesat would provide capacity to the defence industry and support NATO and Norad modernization.

Goldberg said the agreement doesn't include specifics about using the system for defence. He said Telesat's constellation can be a "key enabler" for Norad modernization.

In 2022, the Liberal government outlined a \$38.6-billion plan to modernize the joint aerospace warning system for Canada and the U.S.

Adam Lajeunesse, an associate professor at St. Francis Xavier University focusing on Arctic and maritime security, said the government has some legitimate arguments when it comes to Arctic defence and national security.

He said there's no reason to doubt that Starlink could meet the Canadian Armed Forces' needs today, but it's important to look at what may happen with the company in a decade or two.

The Canadian Press

Trudeau to attend United Nations amid turbulence around the world

At world body as confidence motion looms

KELLY GERALDINE
MALONE

NEW YORK • Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is set to be in New York this week for the 78th meeting of the United Nations General Assembly and the Summit of the Future amid increasing geopolitical instability around the world.

"Canada will have a leading role in making the world fairer and more prosperous," Trudeau said in a news release last week. "I look forward to working with other leaders to accelerate progress on our shared priorities

and build a better future for everyone."

While the prime minister is attending the assembly in New York until Wednesday, the Trudeau government is expected to face its first test in the House of Commons since the NDP ended its supply-and-confidence deal with the Liberals.

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre plans to table a motion stating the House has no confidence in the government or the prime minister.

The New Democrats and Bloc Québécois have said they intend to vote against the Conservatives. Their votes will give Trudeau space to focus on the international gathering instead of a possible snap election at home.

The Summit of the Future, announced by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in 2021, began Sun-

day and continues Monday ahead of the start of the annual meetings at the General Assembly.

As it opened, the UN General Assembly approved a blueprint to bring the world's increasingly divided nations together to tackle 21st-century challenges from climate change and artificial intelligence to escalating conflicts and increasing inequality and poverty.

The 42-page "Pact of the Future" challenges leaders of the 193 UN member nations to turn promises into real actions that make a difference to the lives of the world's more than 8 billion people.

"We are here to bring multilateralism back from the brink," Guterres said. "Now it is our common destiny to walk through it. That demands not just agreement, but action."



Justin Trudeau

The pact's fate was in question until the last moment. There had been pushback from Russia, Saudi Arabia and other countries who objected to some of the language around things such as climate change and reforming international financial institutions. There was so much suspense that Guterres had three prepared speeches, one for approval, one for rejection, and one if things weren't clear, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

"No one is happy with this pact," said Russia's deputy foreign minister, Sergey Vershinin.

*The Canadian Press,
with files from
The Associated Press*

CANADA

Film doesn't reflect accusations against it

SELLEY

Continued from NP1

But the principle predates that document by centuries.

TVOntario pulled its co-funding credit and support from Russians at War, and TIFF cancelled screenings, after a broad coalition including Alexander, Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress complained the film was rank Russian propaganda. I thought it especially disturbing to see politicians and others crowing about their success in cancelling the film even as TIFF claimed to be reacting to threats to public safety.

"In emails and phone calls, TIFF staff received hundreds of instances of verbal abuse. Our staff also received threats of violence, including threats of sexual violence," TIFF CEO Cameron Bailey told an audience for Russians at War, which was screened at TIFF's Lightbox cinema after the festival's close. "We were horrified, and our staff members were understandably frightened."

"We did it!" Liberal MP Yvan Baker crowed on social media after TIFF cancelled the film. "Thank you to all who worked to make this happen."

Iykes. I am among the few who actually watched the film. The fact that the movie did not remotely reflect the accusations against was somewhat beside the point — Russian propaganda is not illegal to screen in Canada — but it made the issue even more confounding. Lederman (who also watched it) accurately called the film "a reproach of war in general." "There's no jingoism or flag-waving for Mother Russia in this exposition, no intimation that Putin's 'special military operation' can ever be won, and no camouflaging the horrors of war," DiManno accurately wrote after watching it.

Supposedly the film is designed to make Russian soldiers look so inept and pathetic, that the West will think twice about arming Ukraine. If that was the goal — and it's an odd one, as pro-Russian propaganda goes — it was a spectacular miss.

But let's get back to me, the fascism apologist. Resisting a powerful urge toward profanity, I asked Alexander several times whether he had seen Russians at War. He certainly implied that he had in his National Post op-ed denouncing it. "The ... film ... is hopelessly one-sided, giving voice only to the foot soldiers of Russian aggression," he wrote. "(It) is

transparently part of (Russia Today's) latest elaborate effort to circumvent sanctions by presenting a 'Russian perspective' at film festivals that whitewashes the country's war of aggression against Ukraine and its people."

How would he know all that without seeing it?

But he hasn't seen it, he finally confirmed, "for the same reasons I never watched (Russia Today) or Leni Riefenstahl for that matter: propaganda is not designed to inform but to debase, distort and disorient."

It's a funny sort of self-styled propaganda expert, I submit, who won't watch propaganda because it's propaganda. Riefenstahl's Triumph of the Will, a harrowing treachery account of the Nazi Party's 1934 congress in Nuremberg, is perhaps the most famous and influential piece of propaganda there is. It is not considered unwatchable. It's considered essential. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum includes clips on its website.

So where does that leave us, then?

Having succeeded at TIFF, the censors' coalition turned its sights on Nova Scotia's mighty Lunenburg Doc Festival. Senators Stan Kutcher and Donna Dasko wrote a letter to Lunenburg, N.S., calling the film "an exquisite piece of soft propaganda" and "not, as some have stated, an antiwar film," and demanding its cancellation. They seem to have failed, which is good news: Bruce MacCormack, chair of the festival's board, released an admirably straightforward statement in its defence: "While not a comprehensive study of the invasion, it does provide a window to observe the devastating impact of distant political decisions on the lives of less powerful individuals."

One hopes the senators had at least seen the film. One hopes the Lunenburg Doc Festival's employees and volunteers didn't suffer the same harassment TIFF's reportedly did. And one hopes, though probably in vain, the censors might learn something from all this.

And one more thing. Every time we get into one of these arguments over misinformation, or disinformation, or propaganda, I do find myself wondering: Why is Russian or Chinese or Israeli or Palestinian propaganda apparently so much more serious an issue than the high-test bullshit Canadian politicians feed us every day? About movies they haven't seen, for example? And about much, much more important things?

National Post
cselley@postmedia.com



CHRIS YOUNG / THE CANADIAN PRESS

A protestor outside a screening of the documentary film Russians At War in Toronto last week.

IRAN

COAL MINE BLAST
KILLS AT LEAST
34 WORKERS

An explosion in a coal mine in eastern Iran killed at least 34 workers and injured 17 others, officials said Sunday, marking one of the worst mining disasters in the country's history as others remained missing hours after the blast. The blast struck a coal mine in Tabas, about 540 kilometres southeast of the capital, Tehran, on Saturday night. By Sunday, weeping miners stood alongside mine cars that brought up the bodies of their colleagues, all covered in coal dust. About 70 people had been working at the time of the blast. State television later said that 17 were believed to be trapped at a depth of 200 metres down a 700-metre tunnel. However, figures kept changing throughout Sunday regarding the disaster in the rural area with some reports suggesting the death toll was higher. . *The Associated Press*



Congo
frees 600
inmates at
main prison

OVERCROWDING

JEAN-YVES KAMALE

KINSHASA, CONGO • Authorities in Congo said they released 600 prisoners in the country's main prison on Saturday as part of a process aimed at decongesting overcrowded prisons.

Justice Minister Constant Mutamba announced the move during a ceremony at Makala Central Prison in Congo's capital, Kinshasa.

There are plans for construction of a new prison in Kinshasa, he said, without giving more details.

Makala prison, Congo's largest penitentiary with a capacity for 1,500 people, holds more than 12,000 inmates, most of whom are awaiting trial, Amnesty International said in its latest country report.

Earlier this month, an attempted jailbreak in the prison left 129 people dead, including some who were shot by guards and soldiers and others who died in a stampede at the overcrowded facility, according to authorities. Emmanuel Adu Cole, a prominent prison rights activist in Congo and president of the local Bill Clinton Peace Foundation, put the death toll at more than 200.

There were also several cases of women raped during the attempted jailbreak, Congolese Interior Minister Jacquemin Shabani posted on X earlier this month, without elaborating.

"We have had a difficult time in recent days with everything that was happening here, there were rapes, we were victims, many of us died," said Prisca Mbombo, one of the freed prisoners. The 22-year-old Mbombo spent two months in the prison after being arrested following a fight in a bar.

"We really thank this gesture from the minister and I will never return to this place," she said.

Inmates had increasingly grown frustrated with the poor conditions in the facility, including inadequate beds, poor feeding and poor sanitation. However, authorities failed to act despite warnings, said Cole, whose foundation has visited the prison in the past.

Stanis Bujakera Tshimama, a prominent Congolese journalist who was recently detained in the prison for months, spoke of its "deplorable and inhumane" conditions and how inmates constantly lack food, water and medical care. Nearly 700 women, and hundreds of minors who are "treated in the same way as adults," are among the inmates, he said.

Mutamba, the justice minister, said that around 10 minors were freed on Saturday, while he ordered prison authorities to examine the cases of all minors to organize more releases. There are around 300 minors at Makala prison, according to the prison's deputy director.

"I am happy to regain my freedom. I am still young and I can return to my studies," Munganga Mungendo, a 16-year-old who spent more than a year at the prison after having been sentenced to four years for theft, told The Associated Press.

The Associated Press

THE ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR



HEZBOLLAH MILITARY MEDIA OFFICE / AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Hezbollah top commander Ibrahim Aqil was killed Friday in a targeted Israeli strike on Beirut's southern suburbs. The terrorist group called him a "great martyr."

Who was Hezbollah leader
killed in Israeli strike?

Ibrahim Aqil led
operations unit
for two decades

SAMMY WESTFALL AND
SUSANNAH GEORGE

Prominent Hezbollah official Ibrahim Aqil was killed in a targeted strike in the Jamous area south of Beirut on Friday, Hezbollah and the Israeli military said.

Aqil was a Hezbollah leader who sat on the terrorist group's military council. He led Hezbollah's Operations Unit for two decades, the IDF said.

"Ibrahim Aqil had the blood of many innocent people on his hands — Israelis, Americans, French, Lebanese and more," Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, an IDF spokesman, said in a video statement.

Aqil appeared to have taken over from Fuad Shukr,

the senior Hezbollah commander killed in an Israeli strike in the same southern Beirut suburb over a month ago, according to Amal Saad, a lecturer in politics and international relations at Cardiff University in Wales who researches Hezbollah.

"It's a huge blow for sure," Saad said of the strikes that have killed two of the group's most senior members within two months. But she cautioned that Hezbollah is designed to quickly and seamlessly replace even its top commanders. It was unlikely, she added, that the killing would impact the group's operations.

In Hezbollah's announcement of Aqil's death, the terrorist group called the commander a "great martyr," adding that "Jerusalem was always in his heart, mind and thoughts day and night. Jerusalem was the passion of his soul and praying in its mosque was his greatest dream." In its statement, the group acknowledged

that several other Hezbollah members were also killed in Friday's strike.

Aqil was wanted by the U.S. government and was a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist." The State Department's Rewards for Justice program announced a reward of up to \$7 million for information leading to the "identification, location, arrest, and/or conviction" of Aqil.

The State Department said Aqil was a "principal member" of the Hezbollah terrorist Islamic Jihad Organization that claimed the bombings of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut in April 1983 that killed 63 people, including 17 Americans, as well as the U.S. Marine Corps barracks bombing in October 1983, which killed 241 U.S. personnel.

He also "directed" the abduction of American and German hostages in Lebanon in the 1980s, it added.

The Washington Post

IDF serves Al Jazeera with shutdown order

Israel Defense Forces soldiers served al Jazeera's office in Ramallah with a 45-day closure order on Sunday morning due to the network's support for terrorism, the Qatari broadcaster confirmed.

Al Jazeera was broadcasting from Ramallah when IDF troops entered its bureau in the Palestinian Authority-controlled city and handed the order to one of its staffers, after which the live stream was shut down.

"There is a court ruling for closing down Al Jazeera for 45 days," a soldier reportedly told bureau chief Walid al-Omari, asking him to "take all the cameras and leave the office now."

The Israeli closure order charged the Qatari channel with incitement to and support of terrorism, according to Sunday's Al Jazeera reporting.

Israeli Communications

Minister Shlomo Karhi posted footage of the operation on X, noting that Al Jazeera is defined as an "enemy channel."

"After much pressure ... security forces this morning raided al Jazeera's main offices in Judea and Samaria — the mouthpiece of Hamas and Hezbollah — following the order to close the station," Karhi wrote.

"We will continue to fight enemy channels and ensure the safety of our heroic (IDF) fighters," he added.

Hamas condemned the IDF raid, with Izzat al-Rishq, a senior member of its "political" bureau, saying in a statement that the Palestinian terrorist organization "stands in solidarity with Al Jazeera."

He accused Israel of a "violation of press freedom ... , retaliation against (al Jazeera's) professional role in exposing the crimes of the occupation" and "an attempt

to cover up the actions of the resistance in Gaza, and Hezbollah's targeting of military bases deep inside (Israel)."

In April, the Knesset voted 71-10 to pass a law giving Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu the authority to shut down al Jazeera's operations. The legislation states that the communications minister may act against a foreign channel that harms the state's security, with the consent of the prime minister and the approval of the Cabinet.

The measure enables authorities to order television providers to stop broadcasting the outlet, close its offices in Israel, seize its equipment, shut down its website, and revoke press credentials for staff.

Earlier this month, Jerusalem announced its intention to revoke all press passes of Al Jazeera reporters working in territory under its control.

JNS.org

Schools shut, workplaces
restricted in northern Israel

ISRAEL

Continued from NP1

The IDF has declined to comment on the two waves of explosions — the first of which came hours after the Israeli Cabinet added the return of residents displaced from their homes in the north to the country's war goals.

On Friday afternoon, the IDF took credit for a targeted airstrike that killed senior Hezbollah commander Ibrahim Aqil — alias Al-Hajj Abdul Khader — in the Dahiyeh neighbourhood of Beirut, a Hezbollah stronghold.

Aqil was a high-ranking member of Hezbollah's top "military" body, the Jihad Council, which is subordinate to the Shura Council and under the direct control of Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah.

Israeli President Isaac Herzog revealed in an interview with Britain's Sky News on Sunday that Aqil and his associates were targeted as they were discussing plans for an Oct. 7-style invasion of Israeli territory.

Hezbollah "has been armed to its teeth by the Iranian empire of evil, and all of these leaders who were eradicated on Friday by the Israeli attack, all of these leaders, were meeting together in order to launch the same horrific, horrendous attack that we had on Oct. 7 by Hamas," Herzog said.

IDF spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said that at the time of the strike,

THEY WERE IN
THE MIDDLE
OF PLANNING
MORE TERROR
ATTACKS.

Aqil and other Radwan Forces commanders were "gathered underground under a residential building in the heart of the Dahiyah neighbourhood, hiding among Lebanese civilians, using them as human shields."

"They were in the middle of planning more terror attacks against Israeli civilians," he added.

He claimed that Aqil and the Radwan commanders were planning Hezbollah's "Conquer the Galilee" invasion. "These terrorists planned to do in northern Israel what Hamas did in southern Israel on Oct. 7," Hagari said.

Hezbollah has attacked Israel nearly daily since Oct. 8, 2023, firing thousands of rockets, missiles and

drones. The attacks have killed more than 40 people and caused widespread damage. Tens of thousands of Israeli civilians remain internally displaced due to the violence.

Several people were hurt when Hezbollah launched more than 100 rockets and drones at northern Israeli towns and cities in waves of attacks overnight Saturday and Sunday morning.

Hezbollah took responsibility for the launches, saying that it had sent "dozens of Fadi 1 and Fadi 2 missiles" at the Ramat David Airbase and a Rafael Advanced Defense Systems facility near Haifa. This reportedly marked the first time that it has used this type of weapon since Oct. 8.

Hezbollah said that the projectiles launched at what it claimed were military facilities were "in response to the repeated Israeli attacks that targeted various Lebanese regions and led to the fall of many civilian martyrs," in reference to last week's device blasts.

Sunday's Hezbollah projectiles were headed as far south as the Haifa area, about 27 kilometres from the Israel-Lebanon border.

Israeli emergency services said three people were injured from a barrage fired toward a residential area at Kiryat Bialik. Other fallen projectiles were identified in the residential communities of Tsur Shalom and Moreshet. Numerous fires were ignited in the area.

In response, the IDF said it attacked Hezbollah military targets in Lebanon, including rocket launchers, and said it will intensify efforts to degrade the Iran-backed group's capabilities and infrastructure. Israel carried out more than 60 airstrikes early Sunday, according to Lebanon's state-run NNA.

Schools were shut across large areas of Israel's north on Sunday, as part of a broader change in the home front command's guidelines. In most of these areas restrictions have also been placed on places of work, which are allowed to operate only if a shelter can be reached within in a short time.

Hospitals across northern Israel will move activities to protected areas, the health ministry said. Rambam Hospital in Haifa, one of the nation's largest, will transfer operations a sheltered, underground parking lot, and non-urgent medical procedures have been postponed.

Outdoor gatherings have been limited to a maximum of 10 people and indoor gathering to no more than 100. Beaches were also shut.

JNS



ANWAR AMRO / AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

People check damage following an Israeli strike in Beirut's southern suburbs on Friday. The Israeli military said several Hezbollah members were killed.

FRANCE

NEW GOVERNMENT
ANNOUNCED 2 MONTHS
AFTER ELECTIONS

The French presidential palace unveiled a long-awaited new government Saturday dominated by conservatives and centrists. It came more than two months after elections that produced a hung parliament and deepened political divisions as France grapples with financial and diplomatic challenges. A left-wing coalition secured the most seats in June-July parliamentary elections but failed to win



a majority. Student groups and activists from the hard-left France Unbowed party held protests around the country Saturday against a government they say rejects the voters' will. President Emmanuel Macron named conservative Michel Barnier, shown, as prime minister earlier this month even though Barnier's Republicans party had a poor showing in the elections. *The Associated Press*

Several
wounded
in strikes
on Kharkiv

ZELENSKYY PLEA

SAMYA KULLAB

KYIV • Russia launched new strikes in the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv that hit highrise apartment buildings, leaving at least 21 wounded in a second consecutive nighttime attack, authorities said.

The bombs fell Saturday night on the district of Shevchenkivsky, north of the centre of Kharkiv, which is the second-largest Ukrainian city, local Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said. Residential buildings sustained varying degrees of damage, including 16- and nine-storey buildings, he added. Kharkiv's city council said that 18 buildings were damaged.

The wounded included an eight-year-old child, according to Syniehubov and Kharkiv Mayor Ihor Terekhov. Terekhov said that 60 residents were evacuated from one of the buildings, a highrise that was hit directly.

Kharkiv has been a frequent target of Russian attacks since Moscow launched its all-out invasion of neighbouring Ukraine in February 2022. On late Friday, 15 people, including children ages 10 and 12, were wounded when Russian airstrikes hit three Kharkiv neighbourhoods, Terekhov said.

Ukrainian officials said that KAB-type aerial glide bombs — a retrofitted Soviet weapon that has for months laid waste to eastern Ukraine — were used in both attacks.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy condemned the strike and urged Kyiv's Western allies to send more weapons to help it "protect lives and ensure safety."

"Ukraine needs full long-range capabilities, and we are working to convince our partners of this," Zelenskyy said on X, as he prepared to kick off a busy week in the United States shoring up support for Kyiv in the war.

And Ukrainian Defence Minister Rustem Umerov said Sunday that Kyiv was in talks with partners in Europe to secure Swedish-made Gripen and European Eurofighter Typhoon jets. Umerov said that commitments were already in place for deliveries of U.S.-made F-16s and French Mirages.

Russia also launched 80 Shahed drones and two missiles at Ukraine overnight into Sunday, the Ukrainian air force said. Ukrainian defences shot down 71 drones, and another six were lost on location because of electronic warfare countermeasures, the statement said.

Farther south, a 12-year-old girl and a woman died after a Russian drone struck a passenger car in the city of Nikopol, local Gov. Serhii Lysak reported. Two others, including a four-year-old child, suffered wounds.

In the eastern Donetsk region, a Russian airstrike on Sunday morning struck homes in the city of Sloviansk, trapping a woman under rubble and wounding two of her neighbours, regional prosecutors reported.

Other Russian drone attacks Sunday damaged energy infrastructure in Ukraine's central Poltava region and the northern city of Shostka, officials reported.

The Associated Press



KHARKIV REGIONAL MILITARY ADMINISTRATION VIA AP

A firefighter douses a burning vehicle after a Russian strike on a residential building in Kharkiv, Ukraine, early Sunday. Eight buildings were hit in a second consecutive nighttime attack authorities said.

WORLD BRIEFS



LAPRESSE VIA AP

A gas explosion is suspected in the collapse of a building in Naples Sunday.

MASS SHOOTING
KILLS FOUR IN
ALABAMA

BIRMINGHAM, ALA. A mass shooting killed four people and wounded 17 others in a popular nightlife area in Birmingham, Ala., with many of the victims caught in the crossfire, police said early Sunday.

Authorities asked the public for tips as they searched for the shooters.

The shooting happened shortly after 11 p.m. Saturday in Five Points South, a district filled with entertainment venues, restaurants and bars that is often crowded on weekend nights.

Multiple suspects pulled up in a vehicle, got out, fired shots, got back in the vehicle and fled, Police Chief Scott Thurmond said at a news conference Sunday morning. He described the shooting as possibly "a hit" conducted in exchange for payment.

Officers found two men and a woman on a sidewalk with gunshot wounds, and they were pronounced dead there. An additional male gunshot victim was pronounced dead at a hospital, police said.

Authorities believe the intended target was among the dead. Investigators believe other victims were caught in the crossfire.

The Associated Press

THREE DIE, ONE TRAPPED IN
NAPLES BUILDING COLLAPSE

ROME A two-storey building collapsed in the southern Italian province of Naples early Sunday, killing two young siblings and their mother, while burying the children's grandmother under the rubble, firefighters and local authorities said.

The firefighters said on their official Telegram channel that a gas explosion likely caused the collapse.

Earlier on Sunday, the siblings' two-year-old brother had been found alive with the father, who was hospitalized in Naples in serious condition.

Firefighters' spokesman Luca Cari said that rescuers had to be "very careful and move slowly, to avoid new collapses" as they searched for the women.

The Associated Press

SUSPECT IN 1977 MELBOURNE
COLD CASE ARRESTED IN ITALY

ROME A man suspected of the brutal killing of two women in Australia nearly a half-century ago has been arrested in Rome on an international arrest warrant, Italian news agency ANSA reported on Saturday.

The suspect, 65, who has dual Greek and Australian citizenship, was detained at Rome's Fiumicino airport Thursday after landing on a flight that had departed from Greece, ANSA said. The man reportedly lived in Greece, where he was protected by the country's statute of limitations, according to Australian media.

Australian police said Saturday they would start extradition.

The suspect is accused of killing two friends — Suzanne Armstrong, 27, and Susan Bartlett, 28 — in a knife attack that shocked Australia in January 1977.

The Associated Press

BOMB KILLS
FOREIGN ENVOYS
IN PAKISTAN

PESHAWAR, PAKISTAN A roadside bomb targeting a convoy of foreign diplomats killed a police officer and injured four others, an official said Sunday.

The diplomats were travelling to a tourist area in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, which borders Afghanistan and is a base for militant groups, including the Pakistani Taliban.

The blast occurred at the tourist spot and hill station of Malam Jabba, one of Pakistan's two ski resorts, some 250 kilometres north of the provincial capital Peshawar.

The diplomats in the convoy were from Indonesia, Portugal, Kazakhstan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Turkmenistan, Vietnam, Iran, Russia and Tajikistan. All of them are safe and a heavy security contingent was at the scene, police officer Javed Khan said.

The Associated Press

NORTHERN JAPAN
POUNDED BY RAIN,
SEVERAL MISSING

The Japan Meteorological Agency on Saturday issued the highest alert level for heavy rain across several cities in the Ishikawa prefecture, including hard-hit cities Suzu and Wajima on the northern coast of the Noto peninsula.

The agency has since downgraded the heavy rain alert, and kept landslide and flooding warnings in place.

In Suzu, one person died and another was missing after being swept in floodwaters. Another went missing in the nearby town of Noto, according to the prefecture.

In Wajima, rescue workers were searching for four people missing following a landslide at a construction site.

The Associated Press

Marxist wins
Sri Lanka's
presidential
election

ECONOMIC 'ANXIETIES'

KRISHAN FRANCIS,
SHIEKH SAALIQ
AND BHARATHA
MALLAWARACHI

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA • Marxist lawmaker Anura Kumara Dissanayake won Sri Lanka's presidential election, the Election Commission announced Sunday, after voters rejected the old political guard that has been widely accused of pushing the South Asian nation toward economic ruin.

Dissanayake, whose pro-working class and anti-political elite campaigning made him popular among youth, secured victory over opposition leader Sajith Premadasa and incumbent liberal President Ranil Wickremesinghe, who took over the country two years ago after its economy hit bottom.

Dissanayake received 5,740,179 votes, followed by Premadasa with 4,530,902, Election Commission data showed.

The election held Saturday was crucial as the country seeks to recover from the worst economic crisis in its history and the resulting political upheaval.

"This achievement is not the result of any single person's work, but the collective effort of hundreds of thousands of you. Your commitment has brought us this far, and for that, I am deeply grateful. This victory belongs to all of us," Dissanayake said in a post on X.

Outgoing president Wickremesinghe in a video statement congratulated Dissanayake and said he hoped he will carry forward the economic recovery efforts successfully. The election was a virtual referendum on Wickremesinghe's leadership, including restructuring Sri Lanka's debt under an International Monetary Fund bailout after it defaulted in 2022.

Dissanayake, 55, had said he would renegotiate the IMF deal to make austerity measures more bearable. Wickremesinghe had warned that any move to alter the basics of the agreement could delay the release of a fourth tranche of nearly \$3 billion that is crucial to maintaining stability.

Dissanayake's immediate challenge would be to steady the economy "in the face of anxieties felt by business and financial groups about his Marxist and revolutionary background," said political analyst Jehan Perera.

He said Dissanayake represented the spirit of the 2022 uprising during which angry Sri Lankans ousted then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa and called for a "system change" and "new faces in politics."

It was a strong showing for Dissanayake, who won just over three per cent of votes in a previous presidential election in 2019.

The Associated Press



Anura Kumara Dissanayake

PAY FOR PLAY

SURGING COSTS IN YOUTH SPORTS PROGRAMS LEAVE SOME FAMILIES SITTING ON SIDELINES. PAGE NP7



CANADA'S BUSINESS VOICE, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2024



SEAN KILPATRICK / THE CANADIAN PRESS

The assortment of plant-based dairy alternatives on store shelves has “expanded so fast,” says Liza Amlani, co-founder of Retail Strategy Group. Brands are attempting to stand apart from competitors by using eye-catching packaging and marketing, and competing on price, Amlani says.

CONSUMER GOODS

PLANT-BASED OPTIONS GROWING IN DAIRY AISLES

As traditional milk sales dry up, alternative offerings keep on sprouting

ROSE SABA

When it comes to plant-based alternatives, Canadians have never had so many options — and nowhere is that choice more abundantly clear than in the milk section of the dairy aisle.

To meet growing demand, companies are investing in new products and technology to keep up with consumer tastes and differentiate themselves from all the other players on the shelf.

“The product mix has just expanded so fast,” said Liza Amlani, co-founder of Retail Strategy Group.

She said younger generations in particular are driving growth in the plant-based market.

Commercial sales of dairy milk have been weakening for years, according to research firm Mintel, likely in part because of the rise of plant-based alternatives — even though many Canadians still drink dairy.

The No. 1 reason people opt for plant-based milk is because they see it as healthier than dairy, said Joel Gregoire, Mintel’s associate director for food and drink.

“Plant-based milk, the one thing about it — it’s not new. It’s been around for quite some time. It’s pretty established,” said Gregoire.

Because of that, it serves as an “entry point” for many consumers interested in plant-based alternatives to animal products, he said.

Plant-based milk consumption is expected to continue increasing in the coming years, according to Mintel research, with more options available and more consumers opting for a diet that includes both dairy and non-dairy milk.

A 2023 report by Ernst & Young for Protein Industries Canada projected that the plant-based dairy market will reach US\$51.3 billion in 2035, at a compound annual growth rate of 9.5 per cent.

Because of this growth opportunity, even well-established dairy or plant-

based companies are raising their game.

It’s been more than three decades since Saint-Hyacinthe, Que.-based Natura first launched a line of soy beverages. Over the years, the company has rolled out new products to meet rising demand.

Competition is tough, said owner and founder Nick Feldman — especially from large U.S. brands, which have the money to ensure their products hit shelves across the country.

Natura has kept growing, though, with a focus on using organic ingredients and localized production from raw materials.

“We’re maybe not appealing to the mass market, but we’re appealing to ... the organic consumer,” Feldman said.

Amlani said brands are increasingly advertising the simplicity of their ingredient lists. She’s also noticing more companies offering different kinds of products, such as coffee creamers.

Companies are also looking to stand out through eye-catching packaging and marketing, added Amlani, and by competing on price.

Besides all the companies competing for shelf space, there are many different kinds of plant-based milk that consumers can choose from, such as almond, soy, oat, rice, hazelnut, macadamia, pea, coconut and hemp.

One alternative in particular has seen a recent ascendance in popularity.

“I would say oat is the big up-and-coming product,” Feldman said.

Mintel’s report found the share of Canadians who say they buy oat milk has quadrupled between 2019 and 2023 (though almond is still the most popular).

“There seems to be a very nice marriage of coffee and oat milk,” Feldman said.

The beverage’s surge in popularity in cafés is a big part of why it’s ascending so quickly, said Gregoire — its texture and ability to froth makes it a good alternative for lattes and cappuccinos.

It’s also a good example of companies

making a solid “use case” for yet another entrant in a competitive market, he said.

Amid the long-standing brands and new entrants, there’s another — perhaps unexpected — group of players that has been increasingly investing in plant-based milk alternatives: dairy companies.

For example, Danone has owned the Silk and So Delicious brands since an acquisition in 2014, and long-standing U.S. dairy company HP Hood LLC launched Planet Oat in 2018.

Lactalis Canada also recently converted its facility in Sudbury, Ont., to manufacture its new plant-based Enjoy! brand, with beverages made from oats, almonds and hazelnuts.

“As an organization, we obviously follow consumer trends, and have seen the amount of interest in plant-based products, particularly fluid beverages,” said Mark Taylor, chief executive of Lactalis Canada, whose parent Lactalis is the world’s largest dairy products company.

The facility was a milk processing plant for six decades, until Lactalis Canada began renovating it in 2022.

“We’re predominantly a dairy company, and we’ll always predominantly be a dairy company, but we see these products as complementary,” said Taylor.

It makes sense that major dairy companies want to get in on plant-based milk, said Gregoire. The dairy business is large but not really growing, while plant-based products are seeing a boom.

“If I’m looking for avenues of growth, I don’t want to be left behind,” he said.

Gregoire said there’s a potential for consumers to get confused with so many options, which is why it’s vital for brands to find a way to differentiate themselves.

Competition in a more crowded market is challenging, but Taylor says it results in better products for consumers.

“It forces you to be really good at what you’re doing. It drives innovation,” he said.

“IF YOU’RE A SUPERSTAR AND YOU’RE IN A SPORT, YOU FEEL LIKE THE INVESTMENT IS ‘WORTH IT,’ THERE’S A (RETURN ON INVESTMENT) THERE. BUT WHEN YOU’RE SO YOUNG, THE BIGGEST PART OF BEING IN A SPORTING ACTIVITY IS TO HAVE FUN. IT IS TO GROW — *MONISHA SHARMA*”

TRAINING

Earn while you learn

How apprenticeships give students a leg up in the trades

NINA DRAGICEVIC

Apprenticeships can be a dream scenario. You can earn while you learn, jobs are in demand, incomes are often high.

Employers and governments are eager to help students through the process with a variety of grants, resources and learning supports.

EllisChart.ca shows how 320 trades are handled across the country — whether certification is available and compulsory, if apprenticeship programs exist, how many training hours are required, and so on.

Would-be apprentices can thrive with a few key qualities and interests, said Jeff Ritter, chief executive of the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission.

First and foremost, skilled tradespeople should be problem-solvers, he said. They should have a natural interest in working with their hands and being active throughout the day. They should be comfortable with math and science, as some trades use these subjects daily, he pointed out.

And technology lovers will thrive in many industries.

“If you like working with the latest technology — this will blow your mind — but the trades are where you want to be,” Ritter said.

“The future already exists within the skilled trades. Take agricultural equipment technician, for example — they’ve had full self-driving agricultural equipment for years and years. It’s ridiculously high-tech, so if you’re excited about working with the latest and the greatest, this is the place to be.”

Provinces and territories have their own rules regarding regulation, training and certifying of various trades, while Red Seal trades, such as plumber or landscape horticulturist, are formally recognized across Canada.

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency, for instance, functions as both a regulator of apprenticeships, as well as organizes programs with training providers.

“There are two different main ways that you can get into an apprenticeship,” said CEO Michelle Bussey. “There’s direct entry — basically anybody can go find an employer that’s willing to take them on as an apprentice, and then they form an agreement with us, and then they’re working as an apprentice.”

“The other way is pre-apprenticeship, or pre-employment. That might be through a local community college where they do a one- or two-year program, get a certificate from the college, and then that puts them in advanced standing.”

That’s a main perk of taking an apprenticeship — you already have a job. Red River College Polytechnic in Winnipeg offers certificates and diplomas for various trades, but joining the apprenticeship program means you’re already hired.

“So when we talk about employment rates, it’s 100 per cent because every apprentice that comes for training is employed,” said

Derek Kochenash, dean of the School of Skilled Trades and Technologies. “They have an employer sponsor.”

In terms of challenges, Kochenash said some professions or industries are seasonal, which may involve downtime in the winter, and some trades involve working outside in the elements. But many aspects of trades industries have evolved rapidly for today’s generation.

“One of the stigmas associated with skilled trades is around safety, and being dirty,” Kochenash said.

“Skilled trades have come miles and miles with respect to their working conditions and the safety measures that are put in place. Back when I was a young apprentice, we certainly didn’t have as much PPE, companies weren’t following the strict safety regimen that is out there today.”

If students assume apprenticeships are fully hands-on learning, Bussey pointed out that classroom training and theory is still involved, as well as exam writing. But there are classroom supports available for those with different learning abilities.

And some stretches of technical training may not be paid by the employer, Ritter noted — it depends on the company. But students can use employment insurance during gaps in income.

Otherwise, there aren’t many more downsides to apprenticeships for students who have interest in these careers.

“Across the country, there are apprenticeship and skilled trades opportunities in every single community,” Bussey said. “I sit on lots of national committees and

“EVERY APPRENTICE THAT COMES FOR TRAINING IS EMPLOYED”

groups, and we’re all saying the same thing — nobody can find enough workers. So there’s a huge opportunity.”

Kochenash said workers have a number of employment streams to choose from in trades — they can travel, they can join large infrastructure projects, they can start a business, they can work in management or become president of a company, they can work in education to train others.

There’s a lot of job satisfaction as well, Ritter said.

“The people driving the nice trucks and living in the really nice houses — oftentimes, you know, they’re skilled tradespeople, but they’re humble about it,” he said.

The Canadian Press



Jeff Ritter



WILFREDO LEE / THE CANADIAN PRESS / AP FILES

For families that can afford to play, or qualify for assistance, there are few substitutes for the value that a child’s sporting experience can give them for years to come, KidSport Canada chief executive Greg Ingalls says.

PERSONAL FINANCE

PARENTS LOOK TO SAVE COSTS AS YOUTH SPORTS PROGRAMS GET MORE EXPENSIVE

SAMMY HUDES

When Monisha Sharma looked into swim lessons for her daughter, she decided to take an unconventional route to save costs.

Rather than enrolling in a formal program, the Toronto woman joined together with a group of neighbours who pooled funds to hire a private instructor at a recreation centre.

Sharma figured swimming and soccer, which her four-year-old also recently picked up, would be “the two cheap programs” compared with other youth sports options like hockey. She has quickly learned how expensive any program can be.

As Canadians cope with rising costs in all corners of their lives, experts say kids’ athletic programs are no exception, making it more difficult for families to keep their children active at an affordable price.

“When you look at the rising costs, all these things add up very quickly — ‘Oh, it’s only \$50 for this or \$100 for this.’ And then you’re looking at thousands, which is shocking to me; thousands of dollars on an annual basis,” Sharma said.

She estimated a final price tag ranging from \$700 to \$1,000 to keep a young child in soccer for a full year, including annual expenses for equipment such as new shoes.

But costs at the beginner level pale in comparison to what awaits parents as their kids get older, especially if they want to play at more advanced levels of a particular sport.

Chris Scheele, an Edmonton-based financial planner at Align Wealth, said fees can quickly snowball to amounts “that families are not prepared for.”

“I think a lot of people are feeling like it’s harder and harder to afford,” said Scheele, who has

spent much of his career advising parents on how to budget for their kids’ high-level sports journeys.

“They really want their kids to have that experience, but the cost is one thing that’s preventing it in some cases.”

More competitive leagues may entail travel tournaments with hotel stays, more ice or field rental fees and even higher quality equipment. That’s on top of the greater time commitment, with practices and games not necessarily confined to the weekend or evenings.

“I think the often-underestimated piece is the cost escalation over the years,” Scheele said.

“If you decide to go to a competitive strain of soccer, the cost difference for a 14-year-old versus an eight-year-old is probably pretty extreme. The further you progress into it, the older you are, the more time commitment, so the more costs for coaching fees or facility bookings or team travel.”

If it seems a child has the potential to pursue their favourite sport at a competitive level over the long term, Scheele recommends families start preparing early for the financial burden. Just like planning for retirement, he said it’s important to have a plan in place that accounts for both known and unknown costs associated with their child’s athletic path.

He also noted there are many assistance programs in Canada that aim to provide financial support for families in need with kids in sport.

One of those, KidSport Canada, helped more than 40,200 kids participate in athletic programs last year by paying a portion of their registration fees — an amount that usually falls between \$300 and \$400 per child, said its chief executive Greg Ingalls.

“We’re seeing that the cost of sport is rising as is the cost of living, and with that, obviously, there’s going to be a larger percentage of families that can’t af-

ford to get their kids into sport or are choosing to spend their dollars in other places,” Ingalls said.

Sharma, a personal finance expert who is chief revenue officer of Fig Financial, said parents are increasingly facing difficult decisions about prioritizing and limiting after-school activities in order to make ends meet.

Compounding the problem is the expectation that children start early in a given sport — both to confirm they are actually interested in continuing, as well as to avoid falling behind their peers if they pick it up late.

“You can’t wait until they’re 12, 13 to enrol them in some of these programs because by then it’s too late,” she said.

“So there is a tremendous amount of parental guilt attached with this. Every parent wants to do their best by their kids.”

She said one of the major consequences to the rising cost of athletic programs is that “it pushes out kids that are not superstars.”

“If you’re a superstar and you’re in a sport, you feel like the investment is ‘worth it,’ there’s a (return on investment) there. But when you’re so young, the biggest part of being in a sporting activity is to have fun. It is to grow,” she said.

“It really is creating a divide between the haves and have-nots, because people are being forced to make these decisions.”

For families that can afford to play, or qualify for assistance, Ingalls said there are few substitutes for the value that a child’s sporting experience can give them for years to come.

“Sport teaches the life skills that they’ll carry with them the rest of their life, how to be a good teammate, how to work hard toward things, rules and consequences for breaking rules,” he said.

“And while we see the cost of sport increasing, it’s still an excellent investment in children’s future.”

The Canadian Press

WILSON UNANIMOUS WNBA MVP

Las Vegas Aces star A’ja Wilson was the unanimous choice as the WNBA most valuable player, the league announced Sunday. The Aces’ versatile forward averaged 26.9 points and 11.8 rebounds this season. She’s only the second player to win the award unanimously, joining Cynthia Cooper of the Houston Comets, who did it in the league’s inaugural 1997 season. Wilson, pictured, received all 67 first-place votes from a national



media panel, making her a three-time award winner (2020 and 2022.) She’s the fourth player in WNBA history to reach that milestone, joining Sheryl Swoopes, Lisa Leslie and Lauren Jackson. Minnesota Lynx forward Napheesa Collier (467 points) finished in second place. The 6-foot-4 Wilson finished the regular season with 1,021 points, 451 rebounds and led the league with 98 blocks. *The Associated Press*

FLAMES ORDER UP A ‘BREW’ FOR PRE-SEASON OPENER

Rookie blueliner impressing coaches with his poise, skill and confidence



WES GILBERTSON

For a guy trying to make a name for himself in the pro ranks, the praise is much more important than the pronunciation. Besides, Calgary Flames defence prospect Hunter Brzustewicz doesn’t mind the shortened version.

Go ahead and call him ‘Brew,’ like the first button you push on your coffee maker in the morning, or that favourite adult beverage in the fridge. “Oh yeah, I love ‘Brew,’” Brzustewicz said, approving the nickname.

That might come as a relief to Ryan Huska. Over the weekend, the Flames bench boss was asked if any of the up-and-comers had really caught his eye during the first few training camp twirls. Coaches are typically hesitant to single out any specific player, but there was one name — or at least a few letters of that name — that popped to mind. “The one guy, and I have such a hard time pronouncing his last name ... I just call him ‘Brew,’” Huska said with a wide smile. “I think he has done a very good job. He seems to me like he is comfortable on the ice. I will say that he’s fitting in really well. He reminds me of a young Rasmus Andersson, if there’s a comparison, where they both have poise to their game. They often see the next option through the first option. So I’ve been really impressed with the way he’s played. He’s one guy that comes to the top of my head right now.”

The 19-year-old Brzustewicz, whose name was among those scribbled on the travelling roster for Sunday’s pre-season opener against the Kraken in Seattle, acknowledged that he did catch wind of that compliment from the coach. “I watch all of those press conferences, the scrums, just to kind of learn and to see what they do during these,” Brzustewicz said. “So yeah, I saw it.



Defence prospect Hunter Brzustewicz looks to dish off the puck during training camp action on Sunday at the Scotiabank Saddledome. A second-team all-star last season with the OHL’s Kitchener Rangers, the six-foot, 195-pound Brzustewicz has been making a name for himself at camp. *GAVIN YOUNG*

“It means a lot. I think it’s great. I think it gives me confidence, as well. I think it’s pretty cool that he sees me like that and hopefully, I can just keep it going.” If he keeps this up, it feels like it won’t be long before Flames fans are talking about ‘Brew’ as they settle into their seats at the Saddledome. While Brzustewicz is expected to start his pro career with the AHL’s Wranglers, this strong September — including a stand-out performance at the Young Stars Classic tournament — is only reinforcing his status as one of Calgary’s most promising prospects, as reason to believe there is a bright future ahead. It seems the excitement has been steadily building since the Flames landed this offensive-minded blueliner in January as a key piece of the return in the Elias Lindholm trade. It speaks volumes that Huska sees shades of Andersson, who has led the

team in average ice time in each of the past three seasons. It’s not only the boss who has been impressed with Brzustewicz, who checked in for camp at six feet tall and 195 pounds. During his first media scrum, top-pairing defenceman MacKenzie Weegar was asked about Calgary’s crop of on-the-rise rearguards and mentioned the two youngsters in his practice group that day — Brzustewicz and Artem Grushnikov — “are great players, both of them” and “you can tell they have a lot of compete in them, a lot of spark.” Weegar had apparently done his research, too. “I saw that Brew had 92 points in Kitchener,” he said, acing the stat line that made Brzustewicz a second-team all-star in the Ontario Hockey League in 2023-24. “That’s pretty elite. They’re doing things that I probably can’t do with the puck.” What’s key for Brzustewicz,

who undoubtedly has high-end playmaking skills, is proving that he can keep the puck out of his own net. He’s been crunching to learn the Flames’ zone style structure, which he admits is “very different from what I’ve done in the past.” In practice, he’s focused on his gap control and stick work and “trying to get my angles right on all these guys.” In Sunday’s exhibition in Seattle, against a lineup that featured forwards Matty Beniers, Jordan Eberle and Jared McCann, he was going to be trying to put those early lessons to good use. “I think a little bit is the pace of the game, learning how to close quick,” Huska said when asked about Brzustewicz’s recipe for success in his own zone. “And over time, the more you’re in those situations, whether it’s practice or games, it’s understanding how to position your body against a guy that’s 230

pounds. That’s going to come into play for all our young guys, really. “As I mentioned, (Brzustewicz) reminds me a little bit of (Rasmus). So once you start to understand the pace that you have to play at consistently, I just see him as a defenceman who is going to keep getting better and better.” **ICE CHIPS:** Sunday’s veteran-heavy practice session offered a first glimpse of the Flames’ potential power play units. Weegar quarterbacked the top troupe, with Nazem Kadri as the faceoff man, Jonathan Huberdeau and Yegor Sharangovich on the flanks and Andrei Kuzmenko as the net-front presence. The second unit included forwards Mikael Backlund, Blake Coleman, Anthony Mantha and Connor Zary, with Andersson and tryout hopeful Tyson Barrie both taking turns on the blue line. *wgilbertson@postmedia.com*

With much-needed win, Roughriders snap seven-game winless skid

DARRELL DAVIS

REGINA Keep it in perspective. The Saskatchewan Roughriders simply staved off the CFL’s weakest team, the Calgary Stampeders, with a 37-29 road victory Friday that simultaneously ended their seven-game winless skid and a tumultuous bye week. It was accomplished with a 207-yard rushing performance from a castoff running back, Ryquell Armstead, and a game-clinching interception by Riders linebacker Jameer Thurman on a truly stupid, last-minute play by the Stampeders. It was also Saskatchewan’s first post-Labour Day victory in three seasons, ending an embarrassing streak first-year head coach Corey Mace wasn’t even aware of before joining the Roughriders. Calgary’s loss also caused

turmoil inside the Stampeders locker room, where several players reportedly engaged in heated arguments after extending their own winless streak to six games and dropping them further into the West basement at 4-9-1. Say what you will about the Roughriders, their bonds never disintegrated during the team’s struggles. A loss could have pushed the Roughriders into the basement, but the win kept them solidly in the West’s third playoff spot at 6-7-1. The Roughriders hadn’t won since July 19, when they improved to 5-1 with all their victories coming against squads that were really struggling earlier this season. Bad coaching decisions, worse rulings from the CFL’s Command Centre, unlucky breaks and crucial injuries, especially

along their offensive line, sent the Roughriders tumbling into such a funk that Mace, two days into last week’s post-bye practices, twice halted a workout to tongue-lash his lackadaisical players for not meeting his “standard.” Whether it was preplanned or not, sending the players to the locker room mid-practice evidently got them refocused. So did the addition of Armstead, an apparent problem child with the Ottawa Redblacks. Despite being the league’s fourth-leading rusher, Ottawa waived him after being ejected from a game, receiving two objectionable conduct penalties and twice being fined for verbal abuse. Upon joining the Roughriders on Monday, Armstead was asked why he was dumped by the Redblacks.

“Ultimately, I can’t say,” said Armstead. “I was a problem in their eyes.” Knowing they needed a power-back to bolster his team’s league-low rushing attack — 78.7 yards per game; 4.4 yards per rush — Mace started calling people about Armstead, who he activated after being convinced the player’s talents and personality would fit into the locker room. Mace saw Armstead nearly overreact following one aggressive tackle, but was “proud how he responded” after recording the fourth-highest, single-game performance ever for a Riders running back. “It means so much to him and therefore it means a lot to me,” said Mace, whose new running back will face his former team when the Redblacks visit Mosaic Stadium on Saturday.

Armstead admitted he knew only 4-7 plays heading into the contest, but was helped by an impressive performance from a decimated offensive line, which unbelievably started the same five players in the same positions in back-to-back games. They should be as much a part of the victory discussion as Armstead’s running, the (penalized) blind-side hit Riders receiver Sam Emilus laid on a Calgary player and the plays made defensively in the absence of starting end Malik Carney and halfback Rolan Milligan Jr. Trevor Harris completed 16-of-18 passes for 248 yards and an impressive touchdown toss to Kian Schaffer-Baker, Harris added 17 yards on three carries and did something Armstead unbelievably didn’t do — scored a rushing touchdown.



LILLIAN SUWANRUMPHA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

NORRIS STILL CHASING VERSTAPPEN Lando Norris survived a couple of brushes with barriers as he won the Singapore Grand Prix with ease Sunday. The win cut Max Verstappen's Formula One standings lead from 59 to 52 points. Six races remain in the F1 season.

Interesting off-season awaits the Blue Jays

After a disappointing year, front office has some important decisions to make

GREGORY STRONG

TORONTO A late-season Blue Jays news release in 2023 trumpeted the team's push to the post-season and release of playoff ticket info ahead of the final homestand. The main hook of this year's offering was instead promotional in nature. It focused on the possibility of fans breaking a stadium record for the most \$1 hotdogs consumed in a season. What a difference a year makes. The Blue Jays, who made the playoffs in three of the last four years, have been under the .500 mark since April 30 and are a good bet to finish last in the American League East. As the club closes out the season with a weeklong homestand, here's a look at five talking points.

FACE(S) OF THE FRANCHISE

The long-term plan for infielders Vladimir Guerrero Jr. and Bo Bichette has been a hot topic since the homegrown talents emerged as star players in the major leagues. That won't change entering an off-season loaded with challenges for general manager Ross Atkins. Guerrero and Bichette are scheduled to become unrestricted free agents after the 2025 campaign.

The future plans of the franchise will become clearer if they put pen to paper on contract extensions. Guerrero has rediscovered the form that saw him finish second in American League MVP voting in 2021. Bichette, who led the AL in hits in '21 and '22, struggled through an injury-plagued year.

RELIEF NEEDED

A bullpen that had a variety of weapons last year was gutted this season due to trades, injuries and underperformance. It's arguably the biggest area of need as the Blue Jays look to return to contention next season. Closer Jordan Romano is coming off elbow surgery, Yimi Garcia was traded, Erik Swanson had a stint in the minors and Tim Mayza's long run in Toronto ended when he was designated for assignment. Chad Green and Genesis Cabrera became the main high-leverage options in the second half with middling results.

STARTING ROTATION

A solid core is in place in the team's starting rotation but more depth — particularly a quality left-hander — would be welcomed. Veterans Jose Berrios, Kevin Gausman and Chris Bassitt provide a dependable 1-2-3 punch at

the top. Yariel Rodriguez is the likely No. 4 man and Bowden Francis, after a remarkable second half, has made a strong case to round out the five-man crew. Alek Manoah, who missed most of the season after undergoing a hybrid Tommy John surgical procedure, will likely be out until June at the earliest.

TAKING A LOOK

One of the few positives from a last-place positioning in the standings is it allows an opportunity to take a look at rookies, up-and-coming players and recent trade acquisitions. Players like Spencer Horwitz, Nathan Lukes, Addison Barger and Ernie Clement all had opportunities this season and could be factors in 2025.

BOSS ROSS

The front office will be under intense pressure this off-season before the competitive window with the current nucleus starts to close. Atkins has been on the job as GM for almost nine years. The Blue Jays' only playoff victories in that time came in 2016 when they reached the ALCS with a squad largely assembled by predecessor Alex Anthopoulos. The Blue Jays missed out on two-way superstar Shohei Ohtani last year. Another big swing at a top free agent — think Juan Soto or Alex Bregman — is likely needed this fall. Big bats are desperately needed for an offence that sagged all season. It would also prove to the fan base and the baseball world that the Blue Jays are ready to make a major push to be contenders again. *The Canadian Press*



The Toronto Blue Jays must decide if they want to try to sign top hitter Vladimir Guerrero Jr. to a long-term extension as he is eligible to become a free agent after the 2025 season. MARK TAYLOR/GETTY IMAGES

MERCURY MORRIS: 1947-2024

Halfback leaves 'indelible mark'

Dolphins star helped win 2 Super Bowls, was part of team's perfect 1972 season

TIM REYNOLDS

MIAMI GARDENS, FLA. Eugene "Mercury" Morris, who starred for the unbeaten 1972 Miami Dolphins as part of a star-studded backfield and helped the team win two Super Bowl titles, has died, the team said Sunday. Morris, a three-time Pro Bowl selection, was 77. In a statement, his family said his "talent and passion left an indelible mark on the sport." "Beyond the field, Mercury was a devoted father, a loving brother, a loyal friend, and a pillar in the community," his family wrote in a statement. "His presence extended far beyond football, as he touched the lives of many throughout his time in Miami." Morris was the starting halfback and one of three go-to runners that Dolphins coach Don Shula utilized in Miami's back-to-back title seasons of 1972 and 1973, alongside Pro Football Hall of Famer Larry Csonka and Jim Kiick. Morris led the Dolphins in rushing touchdowns in both of those seasons, finishing with an NFL-best 12 in 1972 and then 10 more in 1973. Those two seasons — the best in Dolphins' history — just happened to be the best of Morris' eight-year career as well. He rushed for a career-best 1,000 yards in 1972, then ran for 954 more along with a league-best 6.4 yards per carry the following season. "I think Shula gave everybody a different kind of direction and purpose being coached by this guy," Morris said in 2008. "We were middle-class people and middle-class fans, and Shula was a blue-collar worker. And he had kind of a work ethic that really allowed you to see that if you work hard and you do what you're supposed to do, then things are going to turn out for you — not all the time but you adjust to that and do what's necessary to try to do as best you can." Morris made no secret of the fact that he was filled with pride about the 1972 Dolphins being the first — and still only — undefeated and untied team in NFL history, pulling off a truly perfect season. He also tried to make this clear: No, the Dolphins were not rooting against the teams that came close to matching their feat of perfection or had champagne on ice waiting for the moment that the last unbeaten team in a season gets defeated.

"And for the record, we DO NOT TOAST every time an unbeaten team loses," Morris posted on social media in 2015, when the Cam Newton-led Carolina Panthers started 14-0 before losing the next-to-last game of their regular season. "There's no champagne in my glass, only Canada Dry Ginger ale! Ha!" That sense of humour also got pointed at his beloved Dolphins at times. When Miami was 0-8 in the 2007 season, on its way to a 0-13 start and 1-15 record, Morris offered another of his many memorable quips. "The Dolphins are not embarrassing me, because our record's at the top of the heap," Morris said. "That's not my team. People say, 'Your team is doing bad.' I say, 'My team all has AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) cards.' "

Morris had some personal struggles after his football career ended, most notably being sentenced to 20 years in prison after his 1982 conviction on cocaine trafficking charges. He fought the conviction, admitting he used cocaine — in part to deal with numerous lingering injuries — but never sold the drug. His conviction was overturned by the Florida Supreme Court in 1986 and Morris became a motivational speaker urging people to avoid drugs. "Was I bitter? Not really," Morris wrote in his book *Against The Grain*, published in 1998. "I would not recommend three days in jail to anyone, much less three years. But I must be honest: I needed to go through what I did to develop the character I had when I became a free man."

Morris went into the Dolphins' Walk of Fame in 2013. He remains fourth on the team's all-time rushing list with 3,877 yards behind Csonka (6,737), Ricky Williams (6,436) and Ronnie Brown (4,815). *The Associated Press*



Mercury Morris



Detroit Tigers starting pitcher Tarik Skubal says making his MLB debut in front of empty stands during the pandemic “wasn’t the best.” CHARLIE RIEDEL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

‘Like kind of weird scrimmages in a way’

Pandemic meant the stands were empty for those who debuted in the majors in ’20

STEPHEN HAWKINS

Garrett Crochet, Tanner Houck and Tarik Skubal made their big league debuts pitching in empty ballparks. No family members were there to share the moment when Ryan Mountcastle and Brent Rooker got their first hits. They were among 212 players who made their MLB debuts during the 2020 season that was delayed and shortened to 60 games because of the pandemic. When the games finally began late that July, no fans were allowed and the only crowd noise was artificial through stadium speakers. “All the buildup and all the hard work and everything, it was like I expected a little more. ... I just felt like I was missing out,” said Cro-

chet, a Chicago White Sox left-hander. “You dream of playing on the big stage, but you don’t really understand what it entails. So debuting in the COVID year, to be honest, wasn’t the best,” said Skubal, a 17-game winner this season for Detroit. Four summers later, Skubal, Crochet and Boston starter Houck were first-time all-stars this year with fellow pandemic debuts Philadelphia third baseman Alec Bohm, Washington reliever Kyle Finnegan and Cubs infielder Isaac Paredes. Eleven others have made all-star teams, including two-time picks San Diego infielder Jake Cronenworth, Milwaukee catcher William Contreras and Tampa Bay pitcher Shane Bieber.

Contreras, who was with the Atlanta Braves in 2021, is one of 10 players who made their 2020 debuts and have won World Series rings. The Brewers catcher and about two dozen other players are on teams contending for playoff spots this season — with plenty of fans cheering them in the stadium. “Once it was full capacity, it’s definitely, definitely a lot better,” said Mountcastle, the Baltimore Orioles first baseman. “The fans bring a different aspect to the game,” added New York Mets left-hander David Peterson, who was 6-2 in 10 games as a rookie in 2020. “There’s nothing like a packed stadium going wild.” About 100 of those 212 first-timers in 2020 are still playing or have played in MLB games this year, according to data reviewed through Baseball Reference. But there are also 24 players like Brandon Bailey, who after making it to the majors never got back after that

season. Family and friends never got to be in the stands to watch them play in a big league game. Bailey, who turns 30 in October, retired after a second Tommy John surgery months after his 2020 debut with the Astros. “That hit me the hardest, that my family would never get that opportunity,” said Bailey, who is now a pitching coach in the Orioles organization. Rooker, now with Oakland, recalls the uniqueness of his debut with the Minnesota Twins, getting called up from the alternate training site instead of an affiliate and then his first at-bats that season coming against big league pitchers. The outfielder hit .316 with a homer and reached base in all seven games he played. Traded twice in 2022 and then released by Kansas City, he was claimed by the Athletics and was an all-star in 2023 during a 30-homer season. “We got two different debuts.

We got the 2020 debut and then you got the debut the next year, obviously with fans and with the actual normal ballpark procedures,” Rooker said. “The 2020 games are still intense obviously because they’re Major League Baseball games, but there’s no fans there, so they feel like kind of weird scrimmages in a way. And the next year, you kind of got that real-game feel.” Houck won all three of his starts for Boston at the end of the 2020 season. The right-hander felt the absence of fans was an advantage in allowing him to remain calm and collected when pitching in MLB games for the first time. It really felt like being in the majors when his wife and family were able to be there to watch him in 2021. “I feel blessed that I was fortunate enough to be a part of the group that got to continue playing after such a weird year,” he said. The Associated Press

Of the 212 players who first appeared in MLB in 2020, 17 have been all-stars

STEPHEN HAWKINS

There were 212 players who made their MLB debuts during the 2020 season that was delayed until late July and shortened to 60 games because of the pandemic. It was certainly the most unique season in which to begin a big league career. All players were constantly being tested for COVID-19 while encouraged to remain socially distanced, and every game during the regular season was played in empty stadiums without fans. With all the minor leagues shut down that summer, MLB teams carried a pool of 60 players that made up their active roster, a three-player taxi squad for road trips and the remaining players at an alternate training site. A look at some of names, numbers and notes about the debuts:

ALL-STAR NODS

There was no midsummer classic in 2020, but 17 players who made their debuts that season have gone on to become all-stars. Six of those were first-time all-stars this season: Philadelphia third baseman Alec Bohm, Chicago White Sox left-hander Garrett Crochet, Washington closer Kyle Finnegan, Boston right-handed starter Tanner Houck, Tampa Bay third baseman Isaac Paredes (since traded to the Chicago Cubs) and Detroit lefty Tarik Skubal. San Diego infielder Jake Cronenworth, Milwaukee catcher William Contreras and Tampa Bay pitcher Shane Bieber have all been selected twice. The other all-stars have been

Jazz Chisolm Jr., Santiago Espinal, Andres Gimenez, Jonah Heim, Alejandro Kirk, Luis Robert Jr., Trevor Rogers and Brent Rooker. **HAVEN’T BEEN BACK** There were 24 players who made it to the majors for the first time in 2020, and haven’t been back since. They never played in an MLB game with fans in the stands. According to data reviewed on Baseball Reference, only four of those players are still in the minors on MLB-affiliated teams: Left-handed pitcher Rob Kaminsky (Seattle Mariners), catcher Brian Navarreto (Milwaukee Brewers), right-hander Joey Gerber (New York Yankees) and right-hander Elliott Soto (Los Angeles Angels). Five others played in independent leagues this year, and four played professionally in South Korea or Mexico. **LIKE A COLLEGE INTRASQUAD** Dean Kremer was the first Israeli ever taken in baseball’s amateur draft when the San Diego Padres got him in the 38th round in 2015. Kremer stayed in school then, but signed the following year after the Dodgers got him in the 14th round. He went to Baltimore as part of the 2018 trade that sent Manny Machado to Los Angeles, and made his big league debut with four starts for Baltimore in 2020. Those four games without any fans in the stands felt like the first year in college for Kremer. While redshirting in 2014 as a freshman at San Joaquin Delta College in California, the right-hander would throw five innings against the

starting lineup during intrasquad games every Monday. “That’s kind of what it reminded me of,” Kremer said. “Obviously a different level, but it’s still like I treated that Monday like it was my game day, even though the stats didn’t matter or anything. I knew I was facing our everyday lineup at the time and so still had to compete.” **THEY HAVE RINGS** Left-handed reliever Victor Gonzalez appeared in four World Series games for the Los Angeles Dodgers in 2020, and was the winning pitcher in the Game 6 victory that clinched their first championship since 1988. Gonzalez was the first of 10 players who made their MLB debuts during the pandemic season that have won World Series rings. Right-hander Ian Anderson and Tucker Davison, catcher William Contreras, and outfielder Cristian Pache were part of Atlanta’s title in 2021, while Cristian Javier and Luis Garcia pitched for the Houston Astros when winning the 2022 World Series. Texas had three last season, outfielder Leody Taveras, along with right-hander Dane Dunning and catcher Jonah Heim, who both played their first big league games for other teams. **WEIRD SILENCE** When New York Mets pitcher David Peterson is in a zone, he insists he doesn’t hear too much even when the stands are full. Still, it was odd in 2020 without any fans while he went 6-2 with a 3.44 earned-run average in his first 10 career games.



Philadelphia Phillies third baseman Alec Bohm, right, made his major league debut in the pandemic-shortened 2020 season. He has since gone on to play in the all-star game. ADAM HUNGER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

“I’m at my best when I don’t really hear or see anything else besides the catcher. So there’s been times where I’ve had the same feeling in terms of focus of a game in 2020 the past couple of years,” Peterson said. “But then, like it was almost weird in 2020 where we were kind of pumping noise in to have something. Yeah, it was an odd year.” **FOR COMPARISON** During the 162-game season in 2019, there were 261 players who made their MLB debuts. In the next full season after the pandemic, there were 265 debuts in 2021, followed by 303 in 2022 and 261 again in 2023. Baseball Reference listed 247 first-time players for this season through mid-September. **NEW MARLINS** The Miami Marlins had the most debuts in 2020, with infielder Chisolm Jr. among 18 players appear-

ing in their first big league games. St. Louis had 13, the Chicago White Sox 12, and the Philadelphia Phillies 10. While the average was seven newcomers per team, the Chicago Cubs had the fewest with two. The Los Angeles Angels had three. **OLDEST AND YOUNGEST** Right-hander Shun Yamaguchi had already pitched 14 seasons in Japan and was 33 years old when he appeared in 17 games as a reliever for Toronto in 2020, making him the oldest MLB first-timer that season. Those were Yamaguchi’s only big league games. Washington infielder Luis Garcia Jr. was the youngest, debuting three months after his 20th birthday. He is now in his fifth season with Nationals, and is their starting second baseman. The Associated Press



ANDY LYONS/GETTY IMAGES

GROUNDING Green Bay Packers pass rusher Lukas Van Ness pins Will Levis to the turf after sacking the Tennessee Titans quarterback of during second-quarter action on Sunday at Nissan Stadium in Nashville. The Packers (2-1) had eight sacks in downing the Titans (0-3) 30-14.

Bad contracts for star QBs leave NFL teams in turmoil

Monster deals will cost GMs their jobs and change approach to paying passers

JASON LA CANFORA

WASHINGTON There are a number of desperate football teams already this NFL season, and a common denominator runs through many of them.

There are even whispers about job security in some places — and if you think it's too soon for such a grapevine, then you haven't been around football very long — with problematic quarterback contracts involved in most of those situations, exacerbating the early-season fear and dread. An epidemic of sorts has resulted from the built-in costs of a quarterback's first monster payday after his rookie deal.

Perhaps a recalibration in how teams handle the most important position in pro sports is coming, with the 2024 season already offering some cautionary tales. But that recalibration might come too late for some general managers.

"There are a (boatload) of bad quarterback contracts in this league right now," said one NFL general manager, who is not permitted to speak about other teams' contracts and whose team does not have a massively paid passer itself.

"Miami and Jacksonville just did huge deals and paid guys I wouldn't have paid, and you know they're sweating already. How do you think (Giants GM) Joe Schoen is feeling right now after paying (Daniel) Jones and not drafting one?"

"The (Deshaun) Watson deal is the worst. (The Browns) aren't

winning anything with him there. Aaron Rodgers isn't going to be worth anything close to what (the Jets) are paying him. Denver is still paying for the Russell Wilson contract with all of that dead cap hanging over them. It's a real problem in this league right now."

The Jaguars made Trevor Lawrence a US\$55 million a year guy despite the team's collective collapse last year — which the former first overall pick had plenty to do with — and he's now lost seven straight starts and is barely completing 50 per cent of his passes. Miami gave Tua Tagovailoa a top-of-the-market deal despite his troubling concussion history and lack of big-game victories, and his future is in doubt after another head injury. The Panthers made Bryce Young the first overall pick just two drafts ago — a status that comes with a not-in-

significant financial commitment — and he's already been benched for journeyman Andy Dalton after averaging 4.4 yards per attempt through two games.

The Cowboys waited far too long to pay Dak Prescott — a deal that will cost them \$60 million a year — and their offensive line, run game and defence are all in question, which is going to make winning as many regular season games as they are accustomed to quite a task. In fact, one could argue that a solid third of the league is facing some sort of crisis or issue because of the ramifications of recent quarterback commitments.

"We are all at the mercy of the 'next quarterback up' syndrome now, or at least so it seems," said the chief contract negotiator for a team with a less-than-glowing quarterback situation. "There is an expectation that these guys will get paid as a best-of-breed quarterback because of where they were drafted and some measure of success playing the position. But there

is a lot of regret that can come from that as well. It's a phenomenon in this league that is probably going to cost a fair number of people their jobs."

The league has never been particularly adroit at evaluating quarterbacks. But with the salary cap ever rising — and with the billionaire owners making more money than ever from their players — the cost of doing business at the high end of the quarterback market comes with exceptional price tags, and risks. One can't help but wonder — with San Francisco's Brock Purdy likely looking to top Prescott's deal come this off-season — if more teams will be willing to walk away from first-round passers who aren't busts but who are simply not proven enough to get more than the last big-money quarterback extension.

At a time when the middle class of quarterbacks seems to be shrinking, perhaps there is something to be gleaned from teams that moved on from some of the highest paid quarterbacks in the game — Tampa Bay with Tom Brady, Seattle with Russell Wilson — and instead settled on veteran quarterbacks others had passed on. Geno Smith's mid-tier deal continues to look like a bargain for the Seahawks, and the Buccaneers are getting lauded for buying low on a Baker Mayfield resurgence and rewarding him with a more modest extension.

"I'd much rather have someone like Baker or Geno than what most of the league is playing with," the GM said.

There was a time when the thinking went that a smart, innovative offensive co-ordinator and a solid offensive line could at least keep you competitive. And it just might be that no ordinary passer is going to beat the likes of Patrick Mahomes when it really matters. But more teams might be inclined to find out, with a quarterback making far less than \$50 million or even \$60 million a year.

The Washington Post



The huge contract QB Deshaun Watson signed with the Browns is among the league's worst deals, one NFL GM says. PHELAN M. EBENHACK/AP

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East	W	L	Pct	GB	Central	W	L	Pct	GB	West	W	L	Pct	GB
z-New York	92	64	.590	—	x-Cleveland	90	67	.573	—	Houston	85	71	.545	—
Baltimore	86	70	.551	6	Detroit	82	74	.526	7.5	Seattle	80	76	.513	5
Boston	78	78	.500	14	Kansas City	82	74	.526	7.5	Texas	74	82	.474	11
Tampa Bay	78	78	.500	14	Minnesota	81	75	.519	8.5	Oakland	67	89	.429	18
Toronto	73	83	.468	19	Chicago	36	120	.231	53.5	Los Angeles	63	93	.404	22

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East	W	L	Pct	GB	Central	W	L	Pct	GB	West	W	L	Pct	GB
z-Philadelphia	92	63	.594	—	x-Milwaukee	89	67	.571	—	z-Los Angeles	93	63	.596	—
New York	86	69	.555	6	Chicago	80	76	.513	9	San Diego	90	66	.577	3
Atlanta	85	71	.545	7.5	St. Louis	79	77	.506	10	Arizona	87	69	.558	6
Washington	69	87	.442	23.5	Cincinnati	76	81	.484	13.5	San Francisco	77	79	.494	16
Miami	57	99	.365	35.5	Pittsburgh	73	83	.468	16	Colorado	60	96	.385	33

x—clinched division; z—clinched playoff berth

CFL

East	G	W	L	T	F	A	P	x—clinched playoff berth; Note: Two points awarded for a win, one for a tie.
x-Montreal	14	11	2	1	375	300	23	
Ottawa	14	8	5	1	347	371	17	
Toronto	14	7	7	0	395	375	14	
Hamilton	14	5	9	0	380	440	10	
West	G	W	L	T	F	A	P	
Winnipeg	14	8	6	0	322	288	16	
British Columbia	14	7	7	0	352	350	14	
Saskatchewan	14	6	7	1	370	359	13	
Edmonton	14	5	9	0	399	369	10	
Calgary	14	4	9	1	330	418	9	

NFL STANDINGS

AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

East	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	North	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Buffalo	2	0	0	1.000	65	38	Pittsburgh	3	0	0	1.000	51	26
N.Y. Jets	2	1	0	.667	67	52	Baltimore	1	2	0	.333	71	78
Miami	1	2	0	.333	33	72	Cleveland	1	2	0	.333	50	67
New England	1	2	0	.333	39	57	Cincinnati	0	2	0	.000	35	42
South	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	West	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Houston	2	1	0	.667	55	74	Kansas City	2	0	0	1.000	53	45
Indianapolis	1	2	0	.333	58	61	L.A. Chargers	2	1	0	.667	58	33
Jacksonville	0	2	0	.000	30	38	Denver	1	2	0	.333	52	46
Tennessee	0	3	0	.000	48	78	Las Vegas	1	2	0	.333	58	81

NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

East	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	North	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Philadelphia	2	1	0	.667	70	63	Minnesota	3	0	0	1.000	85	30
Washington	1	1	0	.500	41	55	Detroit	2	1	0	.667	62	53
Dallas	1	2	0	.333	77	89	Green Bay	2	1	0	.667	75	58
N.Y. Giants	1	2	0	.333	45	64	Chicago	1	2	0	.333	53	57
South	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	West	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New Orleans	2	1	0	.667	103	44	Seattle	3	0	0	1.000	73	43
Tampa Bay	2	1	0	.667	64	62	Arizona	1	2	0	.333	82	64
Atlanta	1	1	0	.500	32	39	L.A. Rams	1	2	0	.333	57	91
Carolina	1	2	0	.333	49	95	San Francisco	1	2	0	.333	73	69

NOTEBOOK

Horschel's eagle seals BMW win in playoff with McIlroy

Billy Horschel became the first American golfer to win the BMW PGA Championship twice when he holed a brilliant eagle to beat four-time major winner Rory McIlroy in a playoff on Sunday in Virginia Water, England.

Horschel sank a long putt from near the edge of the green on the second playoff hole, and then hugged McIlroy warmly.

"It's always one of my most special weeks of the year. I enjoy coming here. I feel a sense of ease, I feel a sense of calm," the 37-year-old Horschel said. "I know I'm not from the U.K. or London or England but I feel almost at home when I come here."

Horschel and McIlroy entered Sunday's round three strokes behind Matteo Manassero.

While Manassero fell back, they both carded 5-under 67s to join South African Thriston Lawrence — who posted a clinical 65 on the day — at 20-under and force a three-way playoff.

A Lawrence bogey ended his day, as McIlroy and Horschel birdied to force the second playoff hole.

McIlroy, the No. 3-ranked Northern Irishman who won the event in 2014, now has three runner-up finishes at Wentworth.

Mitch Morse expects a "different opportunity" when he experiences Highmark Stadium as a visitor for the first time.

Morse spent the past five years as Buffalo's starting centre and witnessed how much "it sucks for the other team." Now, he'll be among the ones getting harassed when he returns to the Bills' stadium with the Jacksonville Jaguars on Monday.

"It's a special group of people and it's a special inebriation level that they reach in the game," Morse said. "But it's a beautiful fan base and one that I cherished for five years."

"It'll be definitely a different opportunity to have the stuff thrown at you rather than seeing how it sucks for the other team. Now I'll have to be dodging and dipping stuff. It'll be good."

Blackburn soccer player Owen Beck was allegedly bitten in his team's ill-tempered local derby with Preston on Sunday, his manager John Eustace said.

Beck clashed with Preston's Milutin Osmajic, with replays appearing to show Osmajic's face in contact around the back of Beck's neck, in the second-tier Championship game.

Beck had kicked out at Duane Holmes and was sent off in the 89th minute. It was in the angry reaction to that incident that the alleged biting took place.

"(Beck) went to clear the ball and caught the lad, but he's got a big bite mark on the back of his neck. It's a shame the referee didn't see that," Blackburn manager Eustace said. "He's shown all the lads. He's very disappointed to be sent off, but obviously he doesn't want to have that on the back of his neck as well."

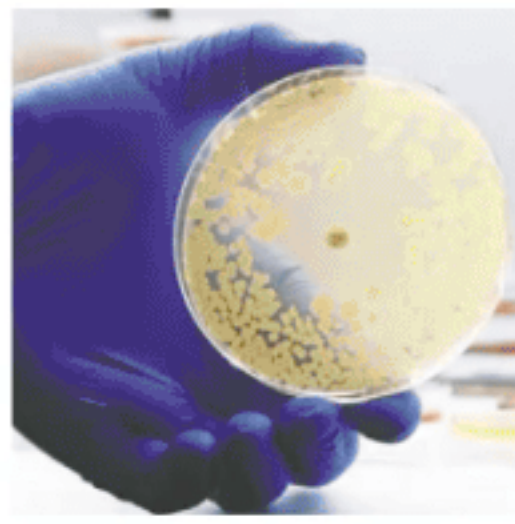
"He's a little bit quiet, a little bit shook up."

The Associated Press

YOU

RESISTANCE ‘CAUSE FOR CONCERN’

More than 39 million people could die globally from antibiotic-resistant infections over the next 25 years, according to a study published in *The Lancet*. Antimicrobial resistance, which is also known as AMR and occurs when germs become resistant to drugs, is expected to worsen over the coming decades. Already more than one million people have died each year between 1990 and 2021 as a direct result of AMR, said the study.



“Antimicrobial medicines are one of the cornerstones of modern health care, and increasing resistance to them is a major cause for concern,” said Mohsen Naghavi, joint first author of the study. Bacteria’s growing immunity to drugs has been driven by the overuse of antibiotics. It makes infections harder to treat and raises the risks of surgery, caesarean sections and cancer treatments.

Lisa Pham, Bloomberg

CALGARY HERALD MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2024

PAGE C1



Even small lifestyle improvements can boost cardiovascular health, Jill Barker notes, including things like getting better sleep, exercising, as well as eating better. PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES



JILL BARKER

One-and-a-half million Canadians are living with cardiovascular disease, which claims approximately 70,000 lives a year in this country. And while the 50-plus crowd is more likely to suffer a cardiac event, the damage is done early. Ninety per cent of Canadians older than 20 have at least one unhealthy lifestyle choice or wellness challenge that affects heart health.

A number of factors play a role in determining who’s more likely to have heart disease. But in an effort to build on the standard risk profile, a team from the National Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention in Atlanta combined two distinct health metrics to better identify those with poor heart health.

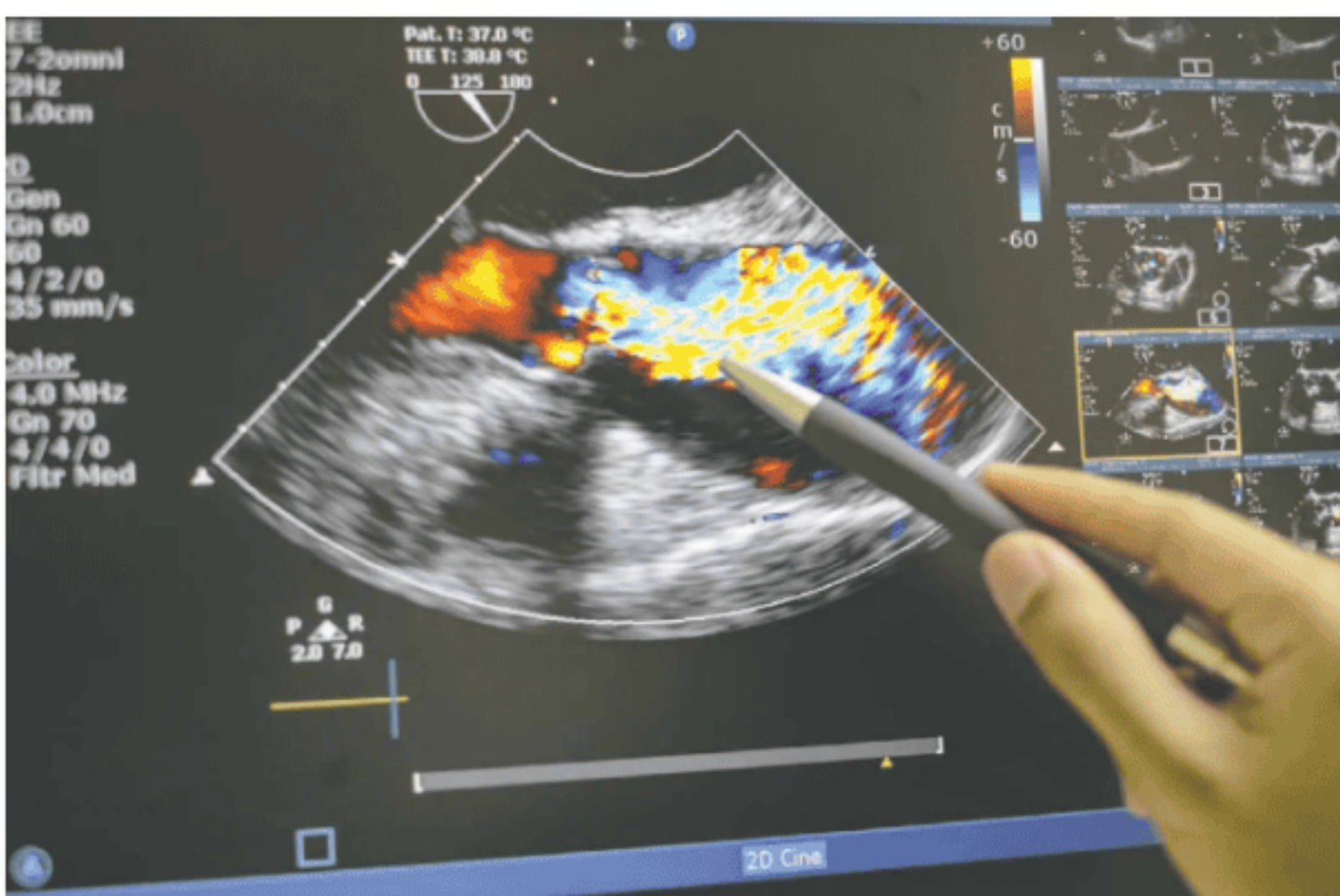
The researchers used eight components of well-being — diet, exercise, smoking, sleep, weight, cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure — to classify the heart health of 7,075 men and women from 30 to 74 years old. Individuals were scored on each of the components, known as Life’s Essential 8, with a higher score associated with a lower risk of heart disease. Based on the sum of all eight elements, study subjects were assigned a grade of low, medium or high cardiovascular health.

Risk was also determined by assigning the study subjects a predicted heart age, with years added to their age depending on their risk factors. The difference between predicted heart age and actual age is defined as excess heart age. (For example, if actual age is 48 and predicted heart age is 55, the excess heart age is seven years.) The larger the gap between the two measures, the greater the risk of developing heart disease.

Over 80 per cent of the study’s subjects had what the research-

THE HEART of the matter

Eight ways to improve cardiovascular health



In a recent study on heart health in 30- to 74 year-olds, 80 per cent had “less than optimal cardiovascular health scores,” with 18.6 per cent of the men and 16 per cent of the women scoring in the lowest category.

ers classified as “less than optimal cardiovascular health scores,” with 18.6 per cent of the men and 16 per cent of the women scoring in the lowest category. As for the age of their hearts, poor cardiovascular health added 8.6 years to the men in the study and 5.9 years to the women. Not surprisingly, the poorer the cardiovascular health, the greater the predicted and excess heart age.

“Overall, the difference in

excess heart age, an alternate measure of cardiovascular disease risk, between low and high cardiovascular health groups was over 20 years,” reported the researchers.

The researchers say the results are a reminder of the importance cardiovascular health plays in enriching quality of life and increasing longevity. When public health messages circulated a few decades ago about the impact smoking, inactivity and

high cholesterol levels have on the heart, a significant number of people started making better lifestyle choices. But those gains have largely stalled due to the high incidence of obesity and diabetes. Hence the need for new ways to highlight the impact poor lifestyle choices can have on long-term heart health.

“Prevention and control of cardiovascular risk factors play an important role in reducing incidence and mortality of cardio-

vascular disease and improving cardiovascular disease, especially amid the significantly increasing trend in obesity and diabetes in the United States,” said the researchers.

Some risk factors — like age and a family history of heart disease — aren’t within our control, but eating better, being more active, maintaining a healthy weight and monitoring and managing blood pressure and cholesterol levels can be self-regulated. And since a healthy lifestyle at a young age keeps the heart from prematurely aging, it’s never too early to pay attention to Life’s Essential 8.

Admittedly, scoring high on all of Life’s Essential 8 is a lofty goal, but even small improvements can boost health and longevity. Better sleep habits, accumulating 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise a week, eating more veggies and fewer sweets, giving up cigarettes and taking medications as prescribed can all make a difference.

“Approximately 70 per cent of cardiovascular events and deaths may be attributed to a small number of modifiable risk factors,” said the researchers.

It’s not just physical health that plays a role in heart age. Stress, anxiety and depression have been linked with an increased risk of cardiac events. In contrast, optimism, a sense of purpose and happiness maintain and improve heart health. Finding ways to manage stress while searching out ways to improve happiness does the heart good. Go for a run or walk, or pull out a yoga mat — exercise is one of the best ways to de-stress.

And remember: Scoring poorly on Life’s Essential 8 is a sign of increased risk of heart attack and heart disease no matter your age. The more you and your family can strive for and maintain a lifestyle filled with heart-healthy habits, the less chance your heart will prematurely age. And when we prioritize heart health, our lives will be longer and fuller.

For more information about Life’s Essential 8, visit tinyurl.com/bdzxhwht.

TV WATCH

Corus freshens up its space

MELISSA HANK

If you're a fan of HGTV Canada or Food Network Canada, get ready for a big shakeup. Parent company Corus Entertainment is introducing two lifestyle channels that will incorporate fan-favourite shows from the original networks along with fresh content designed specifically for the new ones.

Home Network and Flavour Network debut in Canada on Dec. 30, Corus announced Thursday. The programming will feature Canadian original shows as well as international acquisitions. Troy Reeb, the co-CEO of Corus Entertainment, said in an online presentation that the two channels will be "fresher, younger networks that allow us to shake away the old handcuffs and create two amazing, distinctly Canadian brands."

On Home Network, viewers will find many current HGTV Canada shows. There'll be fresh seasons of Scott's Vacation House Rules, Pamela's Garden of Eden, Rock Solid Builds, House of Ali and Renovation Resort. New series include Rentovation, Beer Budget Reno, Life is Messy (starring Kortney Wilson and Kenny Brain) and Building Baeumler (starring Bryan and Sarah Baeumler).

Among others, the international acquisitions are a reboot of Extreme Makeover: Home Edition, hosted by The Home Edit's Joanna Teplin and Clea Shearer; and Honest Renovations, featuring Jessica Alba and Lizzy Mathis.

Over on Flavour Network, homegrown programming includes season 12 of Top Chef Canada, and new seasons of The Great Chocolate Showdown and Carnival Eats. Pamela's Cooking with Love (starring Pamela Anderson) will air its first season, as will The Big Burger Battle with Andrew Phung and an untitled cross-country travelogue show that centres on beverages. Flavour Network will have international acquisitions such as Chasing Flavor with Carla Hall, Adam Richman Eats Britain and not one but two shows from Gordon Ramsay — Gordon Ramsay's Food Stars and Gordon Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares.

"I am thrilled to announce we will be transitioning our HGTV audiences to Home Network, and our Food Network audiences to Flavour Network," Reeb said.

Flavour Network and Home Network will replace the current channel positions of Food Network Canada and HGTV Canada, Corus said in a news release. Both channels will be available for a free preview for two months, from Jan. 3 to Feb. 28, 2025. Programming will also stream on StackTV, which is offered as an add-on for Amazon Prime subscribers.



Pamela Anderson



Actress Kathryn Hahn, stars as witch Agatha Harkness, in Marvel Television's latest effort Agatha All Along. CHUCK ZLOTNICK/MARVEL-DISNEY

SOMETHING'S BREWING ON DISNEY+

Agatha All Along star Kathryn Hahn casts an unforgettable spell

Agatha all Along
Disney+

KAITLYN HUAMANI

As she reprises her role as the witch everyone loves to hate, Kathryn Hahn says it "makes total sense" she's continuing the story.

The Agatha All Along star, who first introduced Agatha Harkness to the world in the hit 2021 Marvel series WandaVision, said the rich complexity of her character excites her.

"It's so juicy. You can see her as a simple bad witch, but she's not. No one is bad," Hahn said in a recent interview. "There's always something that they're covering up that they put all these levels on top of, so the fun was trying to keep the mask on with all these meteors of truth banging at that core."

The Marvel Television series, which premiered last week on Disney+, picks up after WandaVision as Agatha forms a makeshift coven to travel down the mythical Witches' Road on a quest to regain her powers. Although Elizabeth Olsen's Wanda Maximoff/Scarlet Witch captured Agatha's magic in WandaVision, Hahn said she has felt empowered by the role.

A symbol that has become a crucial part of her character is the Neopagan triple goddess — the

maiden, mother and crone as depicted on a brooch Agatha wears in both shows. Hahn says those symbols of transformation in the female life cycle have been reflected in her own life.

"I did feel, walking into this, like I was going to be walking through a portal into my crone area, whatever that means, and it did feel very powerful to feel wise while walking through this journey as a woman," Hahn said. Beyond references to Neopaganism, Wiccan culture and other witchy motifs, Agatha All Along is ripe with allusions. Several films, television shows, musical groups and more permeate the show's otherwise spooky aesthetic, but none appear more prominently than The Wizard of Oz.

Jac Schaeffer, the series' head writer, director and executive producer who also created and wrote WandaVision, said the 1939 film felt like a natural touchstone. "We're in the land of witches," she said.

"Early on, it was clear that it needed to be a quest structure. And for me, the movies of my childhood that I love so much are all quests," Schaeffer said. "Once we were sort of locked into that as the structure, it was like, 'How many allusions can we bring in and what makes sense and what's delightful, what's witchy enough for us?'"

Schaeffer said the series also

alludes to Fleetwood Mac, Kate Winslet in the gritty crime drama Mare of Easttown and Big Little Lies, which she described as a "prestige lady drama soap" where everyone has "sweaters and good hair." She also said the group on that show, led by Reese Witherspoon and Nicole Kidman, are a coven in their own right.

The references work because Agatha is "such a performer," Hahn said — and perform she does. In addition to borrowing from WandaVision's propensity for allusions and replicating esthetics, Agatha All Along also features another catchy tune the cast sings throughout the series.

Hahn, along with the ensemble cast including Patti LuPone, Aubrey Plaza, Joe Locke, Sasheer Zamata, Ali Ahn and Debra Jo Rupp, sing a memorable song that opens a door to The Witches' Road. Emmy-winning songwriting duo Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez, who also wrote the viral sensation Agatha All Along song for WandaVision, penned the tune.

Although some cast members said they were initially nervous to sing in front of LuPone, a Broadway legend, the three-time Tony winner insisted everyone in the cast could sing and blend their voices well.

"It's magical to be in a chorus.

Sometimes, the fates just align. Each member of this coven did have to pick up instruments or we did have to sing, and it all sounds great," LuPone said. "Sometimes, things are fated. I think this was fated."

The tight-knit bonds of the on-screen coven seem to have transcended off camera, as well. Hahn said the group developed a close bond during the shoot in Atlanta.

"Everybody is such a powerhouse in their own right that it was very easy to come to work. Everyone stepped up because we were all so excited to be working with each other," Hahn said. "We were just sitting in a circle on the stage every day, just telling stories and talking about what food we're going to eat next. It just became a dream."

As the cast and creatives behind the series waited for its two-episode premiere, Schaeffer said she was holding her breath. Although she once thought WandaVision would be a "huge flop," Schaeffer said she feels confident in the show. "What WandaVision taught me is it all kind of shakes out," she said. "Not everyone will be satisfied, but the majority of people, I think what they really want is the ride and I feel confident that's what we're providing with Agatha."

The Associated Press

TV's beloved creepy guy

Actor Michael Emerson enjoys 'tickling' audiences with his offbeat performances

HERB SCRIBNER

Michael Emerson doesn't want the flash of a blockbuster. He's not the guy who soars into a battle scene to punch out a purple alien. If he's there, it's to bring a twitch of unease — to straddle good and evil, normal and creepy, pleasant and offbeat. Michael Emerson wants to play, well, Michael Emerson.

"I'm hoping to keep surprising the audience and keep them off-balance a little bit," Emerson said. "I guess that's my uber mission."

He's been doing it for years, and he's done it in two prominent projects in 2024. First in the inaugural season of Amazon's Fallout, in which Emerson shows up as the enigmatic scientist Siggi Wilzig just long enough to ignite the plot and then gently demand the show's heroine decapitate him. And in the final season of the CBS and Paramount+ show Evil, which ended in August and centres on a group of people, including Emerson's inscrutable Leland Townsend, that is tasked by the Catholic Church with investigating supernatural mysteries.

The two roles were reflections of each other, as well as echoes of Emerson's role as the manipulative Benjamin Linus (or Henry Gale, if you never made it past the second season) on Lost, which be-

came available on Netflix in July and is celebrating its 20th anniversary on Sept. 22.

Run through Emerson's career highlights and you'll see that many of his characters have a similar vibe. Quirky, off-putting, vaguely menacing. You don't know if they're going to help you save the island or go on a murder spree. And that's on purpose. "I'm looking for a character who isn't too cut and dry, too completely set out on the page — something that I can go to work on," he said. "I really am attracted to a sense of mystery in the things I play. I'm hoping not to be too easy to pin it down."

Fresh off an Emmy Award-winning performance as serial killer William Hinks in The Practice, he starred in the 2004 horror film Saw, playing a creepy sidekick to Jigsaw, helping to herd victims into the killer's dirty and dark games. From that moment on, the onscreen Emerson was hard to trust.

His breakout appearance on Lost was no different. Emerson was a second-season standout as a supposed hot air balloon expert who crashed on the show's mysterious island. He eventually was captured and tortured by the show's main characters until he was revealed to be an Other, someone from a warring camp of survivors, and later



Michael Emerson has made a career of playing quirky characters. ABC

it turned out he was the leader of the Others. He went on to fight for control of the island and ended the show as its second-in-command, notching multiple murders along the way (while trying to make himself a better person).

In Fallout, Emerson found himself playing a good guy — briefly — as a doctor who is "a little bit mysterious, a little hard to fathom," the actor said. But his work as Leland Townsend on Evil — a character who appears to work with demons and eagerly awaits the arrival of the Antichrist — brought him closer to his Benjamin Linus days than ever before. Though Townsend has charm, he is incapable of remorse.

With his usual verve, Emerson remains debonair as his character bathes in blood or jokes about decapitating nuns. Something awful

might happen to Townsend — sustaining a neck wound that requires stitches, for instance — but he still quips about it.

"He's terrible, but often silly. And he gets into situations where he's thwarted, or his plans go awry, or he's upset and then he is quite childish," Emerson said.

"This is the kind of stuff I like — an inquiry into something more," he said. "(The show) takes us on a journey that might have some terrifying passages in it and also illuminate some human issues."

This is, essentially, Emerson. But in addition to terrifying and illuminating viewers, he wants to leave them "tickled," as he puts it. "I think the audience has seen enough of what I do to understand this kind of thing," he said.

The Washington Post

DINING, TALKING, CONNECTING

Apps that match you up for a meal provide a solution to loneliness

LISA BONOS

SAN FRANCISCO A sticker on a wall in Lisbon caught Katya Gratcheva's attention last fall: "No dating or networking. Just breakfast."

It led the married 52 year old, tired of the transactional networking she encountered at home in Washington, D.C., to download an app called The Breakfast. For a fee, it pairs strangers seeking deep conversation for morning meals in 17 cities worldwide.

Gratcheva, who is Russian, ultimately matched with a young Ukrainian woman whose willingness to discuss the conflict between their two countries felt transformational. "She was able to see a friend in me even though I represent the nation that bombed her country and killed her friends," Gratcheva said.

Gratcheva estimates that she's attended about 30 such breakfasts with strangers in the past nine months. She has lots of company: Apps that offer to connect strangers seeking platonic connections are having a moment. Although they share many features with dating apps, they bill themselves as tools for networking or community-building, not for finding romance, with many like Breakfast targeting isolated remote workers and digital nomads.

In July, the dating app Bumble, which also has modes for networking and friend-finding, completed its acquisition of Geneva, an app designed to help people make new friends to spend time with off-line. Bumble CEO Liane Jones said on an earnings call this month that fostering platonic bonds is core to the company's future business. "What we are hearing from our young users is that they are feeling lonely and disconnected," she said.

Maxime Barbier, co-founder and CEO of Timeleft, an app that arranges Wednesday night dinners for six-person groups in 170 cities across 37 countries, says fatigue with dating apps is driving people toward in-person, friends-only meetups. "We can see that people are craving something that is not a dating app," she said.

These services are proliferating at a time when loneliness is common and city dwellers report feeling detached from their local communities. According to a

February survey from Gallup, one in five workers experiences loneliness. Fully remote workers are more likely to feel lonely (25 per cent), the survey found, compared to those who work fully on-site (16 per cent) and hybrid employees (21 per cent).

A 2023 survey from the Pew Research Center found that urban Americans are less likely to feel they have local connections. Forty-nine per cent of city dwellers reported feeling close to people in their local community, compared with 55 per cent of those in the suburbs and 58 per cent of people in rural areas.

Raymond Ou is one of those city dwellers who's had a hard time making friends. The 41-year-old used to attend tech events to meet people, but since he became a broadcast producer at a local television station whose workday starts at 7 p.m., his evenings are no longer free for happy hours or mixers. "I've sacrificed my social life for this job," Ou said over tofu and veggies at a Burmese restaurant in downtown San Francisco, adding that though sacrifice was worth it, he'd still like more friends, especially those with availability during the day.

Ou signed up for the Creative Lunch Club app after seeing an ad on Instagram that promised to connect people in similar industries. In his first three months as a member, he paid \$11 to be matched with two others for a small group lunch. On the day of the meeting, one of those Ou was due to meet cancelled citing a work emergency — and the other turned out to be this Washington Post reporter.

Ou, who also works as a documentary filmmaker, said he wanted to try the Creative Lunch Club because it offered a space separate from the tech scene, which is ubiquitous in San Francisco. "It's providing opportunities for different people we want to meet," Ou said.

Ou told me that he usually eats lunch alone, making him part of a pattern that spurred Klaus Heller, the founder of Creative Lunch Club, to start the app. "I was thinking this could be a good time of the day ... to meet other people or to be used better," Heller said.

Heller, a freelance social media marketer in Vienna, also had a hunch that people in creative in-



Apps that connect strangers for meals are having a moment. PAOLA CHAPDELAIN/THE WASHINGTON POST

dustries would find a lot to connect on. That was true for me and Ou.

Having spent much of my 20s working nights in journalism, I was able to tell Ou that I knew intimately how an unorthodox work schedule can make it hard to have a social life. We also spoke about the challenges of convincing sources to confide in journalists, how we go about cultivating trust with people we've just barely met — and bonded over our love of the Japanese clothing brand, Sou Sou. Meeting Ou was enjoyable, but at times I found myself thinking that a larger group would have helped round out the conversation.

Kasley Killam, a social scientist and author of *The Art and Science of Connection: Why Social Health is the Missing Key to Living Longer, Healthier and Happier*, estimated that there are now hundreds of apps trying to address the loneliness epidemic by helping

people connect with others — just about every week, she hears about a new one. It's easy to meet new people while in college or your 20s, Killam said, "but what if you move to a new city or go through a breakup? A lot of people struggle for where to turn for that."

Damian Jacobs, a 44-year-old lawyer, faced that conundrum after a recent move from Hong Kong to San Francisco. His wife and children are still thousands of miles away, visiting occasionally as the family finalizes its plans to relocate.

Jacobs tried taking himself out to bars and restaurants and striking up conversations with strangers — but that didn't take. "People at my age tend to be married with kids. They're not going out to bars on a Saturday night and mingling with strangers," Jacobs said. "I've found that places I've gone to, folks are much younger than I am, hanging out with their friends."

Things felt very different at his first dinner arranged via Timeleft. "Everybody at the table is there to meet strangers," he said. Jacobs paid \$25 to access a month of meetups, which combine a different group each week.

After each dinner, Timeleft picks a place for the group to move on to for an optional after-party. At the dinner Jacobs attended in San Francisco's Japantown, his dining partners, including this reporter, chose a nearby karaoke bar instead. "If you told me I would've ended up at a karaoke bar afterward, I would've laughed you out of the room," said Jacobs.

Still, he got up on the stage and mouthed the words to *I'm Gonna Be (500 Miles)* by the Proclaimers with the rest of his dinner-mates.

He has a three-month subscription to Timeleft and will be going for another dinner with a new group soon.

The Washington Post



Apps that foster platonic connections bill themselves as tools for networking or community-building, not for finding romance, with many targeting isolated remote workers.



These services, which offer the chance to network or build friendships over a meal, are proliferating at a time when loneliness is common.

Today

H: 22 L: 12
P.O.P: 20%
Mainly sunny.
Wind: W, 20kmh

Tomorrow

H: 26 L: 12
P.O.P: 10%
Sunny.
Wind: S, 12kmh

Wednesday

H: 27 L: 12
P.O.P: 20%
Mainly sunny.
Wind: SW, 28kmh

Thursday

H: 19 L: 10
P.O.P: 20%
Mainly sunny.
Wind: W, 21kmh

Friday

H: 19 L: 6
P.O.P: 20%
Mainly sunny.
Wind: S, 29kmh

Precipitation

September
Normal, Month [mm]: 36.2
Current: 71.1
Difference: +34.9
Percent of Normal: 196%

Temperature Trend

Today is **WARMER** than Average.
Today's Average [°c]: 16
Expected [at 3pm ET]: 22
Difference: +6

Yesterday's Extreme Temperatures

Hot spot in Canada: 27.2 °C [81.0 °F] Point Pelee, ON

Cold spot in Canada: -8.5 °C [16.7 °F] Svarrevæag, NU

North America Weather

LEGEND

C-Cloudy FG-Fog FR-Freezing rain HZ-Haze PC-Partly Cloudy R-Rain
RS-Rain-Snow S-Sun SN-Snow SF-Snowflurries SH-Showers T-Thunderstorms W-Windy

Alberta Roads

Phone: 511
Website: 511.alberta.ca
Twitter: @511Alberta

Today's Sun

Sunrise: 7:23am
Sunset: 7:34pm
Sunlight Hours: 7

Comfort Indexes

Air Quality

Ultraviolet

TV TIMES TONIGHT - MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

MOVIES TALK SPORTS KIDS

C	B	5 PM	5:30	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30
5	4	CTV News (N) Live	News (N)	CTV News Calgary at 6 (N) Live	Rescue: Hi-Surf (N) (P)			The Traitors Canada (N) (SP)		9-1-1: Lone Star (N) (SP)		Rescue: Hi-Surf (N)		CTV (N)	News (N)
4	38	OMNI Omni News (N)	Celebrity	Celebrity	Omni News	News (N)	Punjabi (N)	News (N)	Omni News	OMNI News (N) Cantonese (N)	Cantonese (N)	News (N)	Cantonese	News-Punjabi	Focus Punjabi
5		ABC 4 News Now (N)	TBA	NFL Football Washington Commanders at Cincinnati Bengals (N) Live						(:15) To Be Announced Programming to be announced.					
6	9	CBC Jamie's Quick	Jamie's Quick	News (N)	News (N)	Coronation (N)	Schitt's Creek	Secrets of Prince Andrew (N)				The National (N)		News (N)	Still Standing
7	2	Global News (N)	Global (N)	Global News Hour at 6 (N)	The Goldbergs	ET (N)	NCIS			FBI: International		To Be Announced		Global News at 11 (N)	
8	5	CITY Kelly Clarkson (N) (SP)		CityNews at 6 Calgary (N)	FamFeud (N)	FamFeud (N) (S.)	Brilliant Minds (N) (P)			The Golden Bachelorette (N) (P)				CityNews (N)	(:35) J.Kimmel (N)
9		CBC-F (4:00) On va se (...)	Silence (N)	TJ Alberta (N)	Téléjour. (N)	Stat (N)	Discussion (N)	Dumas (N)		Doute raisonnable (N)		Le téléjournal (N)		Sports (N)	On va se le dire
11		CMT Cheers	Cheers	The Office	The Office	The Office	The Office	Workaholics	Workaholics	Becker	Becker	Wings	Wings	The Office	The Office
12		CBS KREM 2 News at 4 (N)		News (N)	CBS News (N)	KREM 2 News at 6 (N)		Dateline		Price Is Right "Dream Trips" (N)		NCIS Grave consequences result from the team's hunt for a killer.			
13		CTV2 Bob Heart	News (N)	Primetime (N)	How It's Made	Big Bang	etalk (N)	The Voice (N) (SP)				Suits		Primetime	J.Fallon (N) (SP)
14		PBS Alma's Way (N)	Xavier Riddle	America	Opportun					Antiques Roadshow (N)		America-Judy		POV (N)	
15		NN Canada Tonight With Travis Dhanraj (N)				The National (N)		The National (N)		The National (N)		The National (N)		The National (N)	
16		NBC NonStop (N)	NonStop (N)	NonStop (N)	NBC News (N)	NonStop (N)	NonStop (N)	Jeopardy! (N)	Wheel (N)	The Voice (N) (SP)				Brilliant Minds (N) (P)	
17		TREE PeppaPig	PeppaPig	(:15) Blaze	(:40) Thomas	Rubble	(:40) Binky	(:05) Franklin	PeppaPig	Bubble	(:45) Rivets	(:10) Ready,	Various	(:20) Max & Ruby	(:45) Blue
18		HGTV Ugliest House in America		Unsellable Houses		Celebrity IOU (N)		Celebrity IOU (N) (SF)		Hunters (N)	House Hunters	Celebrity IOU		Celebrity IOU	
20		YTV (4:00) **** Dolphin Tale (11)		Loud House	Popularity	**** Dolphin Tale (11) Ashley Judd, Harry Connick Jr.				Loud House	Popularity	Danger Force	Danger Force	SpongeBob	SpongeBob
21		TSN (4:00) Sports (N)	NFL Football Jacksonville Jaguars at Buffalo Bills (N) Live					NFL Football (N)		SC With Jay Onrait (N) Live				SportsCentre (N) Live	
22		FOX Two Half Men	Last Man	Modern Family	Big Bang	Young Sheldon	Young Sheldon	Young Sheldon	Big Bang	9-1-1: Lone Star (N) (SP)		Rescue: Hi-Surf (N)		News (N)	FamFeud (N) (S.)
23		W The Good Wife		The Good Doctor		Will & Grace	Mindy	Superstore	Superstore	Ghosts	Ghosts	Ghosts	Neighbor	Elsbeth	
24		TLC 90 Day Fiancé: The Other Way		90 Day Fiancé: Other Way (N)		I Love a Mama's Boy (N)		90 Day Fiancé: Other Way (N)		90 Day Fiancé		90 Day Fiancé: The Other Way		I Love a Mama's Boy	
25		FOOD Halloween Baking Championship				Halloween Baking Championship (N)				Halloween Wars		Halloween Baking Championship			
26		A&E The First 48		The First 48		The First 48		The First 48		(:05) The First 48		(:05) The First 48		(:05) The First 48	
27		SNW MLB Baseball Boston Red Sox at Toronto Blue Jays From Rogers Centre in Toronto. (N) Live						Sportsnet Central (N) Live		Misplays	Blue Jays in 30	Plays Week	Plays	Sportsnet (N)	Sportsnet
28		CNN Erin Burnett OutFront (N) Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (N) Live		The Source With (N) Live		CNN NewsNight (N) Live		Laura Coates Live (N) Live		Anderson Cooper 360		Erin Burnett OutFront	
30		SN360 World Chase Tag		WWE Monday Night RAW (N) Live						Plays	Misplays	WWE Monday Night RAW			
32		SHOW FBI		FBI		Bel-Air (N)		(:05) FBI		FBI				FBI	
33		SLCE Neighbor	Neighbor	True Crime (N)	True Crime (N)	Below Deck Mediterranean (N)		Deadly Waters (N)		Daily Show (N)	(:45) After Midnight (N)	True Crime		True Crime	King
34		STZ2W (4:30) ***** Million Dollar Baby (04)		(:50) ***** Selena (97) Edward James Olmos, Jennifer Lopez.						***** Lamborghini: The Man Behind the Legend		(:40) ***** Angry Neighbors (22) Frank Langella.			
35		DISC Mayday		Bering Sea Gold (N)		Deadliest Catch (N)		Deadliest Catch (N)		NUMB3RS		NUMB3RS		Bering Sea Gold	
36		CTVDR Chicago Fire		Chicago Fire		Paris Has Fallen (N) (P)		Insomnia (N)		Chicago Fire		Chicago Fire		Chicago Fire	
37		OLN Below Deck		Below Deck		Below Deck		Below Deck		Below Deck		Below Deck		Below Deck	
38		TOON Hotel/(:15) Total	Beyblade X	Teen/(:15) Teen	Teen/(:45) Teen	Teen/(:15) Teen	Pokémon	Looney/Looney Scooby-Doo		Teen/(:15) Teen	Teen/(:45) Teen	Batman	Batman	Batman	Batman
39		FAM LEGO Friends	LEGO Dream	Jade Armor	TaraDunca	LEGO Dream	Boss Baby	Ruby and the Well (N)		We Are Family		***** The Addams Family (91) Raul Julia, Anjelica Huston.			
40		PCH The Conners	The Conners	All American: Homecoming (N)		The Wranglers (N)		Atlanta News First at 10pm (N)		Inside Ed. (N)	GMFB: Overtime (N)	Seinfeld		Seinfeld	Last Man
41		CTVCo Children Ruin	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	The Conners	The Conners	Young Sheldon	Young Sheldon	Young Sheldon	Young Sheldon	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang	Big Bang
42		TCM (4:00) ***** The Human Comedy		***** Murder on the Orient Express (74) Albert Finney.				(:15) ***** The Shootist (76) Lauren Bacall, John Wayne.				***** Appointment With Death (88) Peter Ustinov. (P)			
45		HIST History's Greatest Mysteries		M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	S.W.A.T.		Beyond Skinwalker Ranch	Skinwalker Ranch			History's-Mysteries (N)		Escapes With Morgan (N)	
46		CTVSci Star Trek		Star Trek		Star Trek		Tokyo Vice (N)		(:15) Castle		(:15) Castle		(:10) Tokyo Vice	
47		AMC (2:00) ***** Casino (95)		***** Goodfellas (90) Ray Liotta, Robert De Niro.						***** Con Air (97) Vicious convicts hijack their flight. John Cusack, Nicolas Cage.				(:35) D. Dixon	
49		DTOUT Border	Border	Border	Border	Alaska Haunting		Destination Fear		Paranormal Lockdown		Alaska Haunting		Destination Fear	
51	32	YESTV The Middle	Mike & Molly	Murdoch Mysteries		Wheel (N)	Jeopardy! (N)	Bull		Huntley	Hear, Love	Life Today	Hagee (N)	Heartland	
55		TLN M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H		Crazy Rich Agents		Incredible Homes	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	For the Love	Dream of Italy	A Taste of	Cehf Sang
119		MUCH Ridiculousness	Ridiculousness	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	The Simpsons	Futurama	Dark Side of the Ring (N)		Ridiculousness	Ridiculousness	Ridiculousness	Ridiculousness	The Simpsons	Futurama
120		MTV How It's Made	How It's Made	Ridiculous (N)	Ridiculous (N)	Ridiculous (N)	Ridiculous (N)	Ridiculous (N)	Ridiculous (N)	Ridiculous (N)	Ridiculous (N)	Ridiculous (N)	Ridiculous (N)	Ridiculousness	Ridiculousness
122		VISN Murder, She Wrote		Sister Boniface Mysteries		Bake (N)	Bake	theZoomer		Murdoch Mysteries		***** A Beautiful Mind (01) Ed Harris, Russell Crowe.			
126		TV5 Forteresses		Normandie, terre de guerriers		39-45 en sol canadien (N)		1914, un été en enfer (N)		(:10) C dans l'air (N)		(:15) Afrique (N)	(:45) Journal (N)	(:15) 39-45 en sol canadien	
127		APTN (2:00) Channel No		Channel No Longer Available		This channel is no longer available.						Channel No Longer Available		This channel is no longer available.	

PAY-TV• MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

MOVIES TALK SPORTS KIDS

C		5 PM	5:30	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30
54	E!	NUMB3RS		Million.	Million.	Sullivan's Crossing (N)		Bob Heart	Bob Heart	E! News (N)	TMZ	TMZ Live		Sullivan's Crossing	
55	CRVM1W	(:20) **** Princes of the Desert (23) Alexandra Lamy.				(:15) **** The Crime Is Mine (23) Nadia Tereszkiewicz.				**** All of Us Strangers (23) Andrew Scott.	(:50) **** Sons of Summer (22)				
56	CRVM2W	(4:15) I Am	(:45) ***** Metal Shifters (11) Kavan Smith.			(:20) Corner Gas (45) Corner Gas	(:10) Law & Order			The Americans	(:50) ***** Poor Things (23) Mark Ruffalo, Emma Stone.				
57	CRVM3W	(4:45) Transplant	(:35) **** Little Jesus (Com, 23) Antoine Bertrand.			(:15) I Am Alfred Hitchcock		(:45) ***** Metal Shifters (11) Kavan Smith.				(:20) Corner Gas	(:45) Corner Gas	(:10) Law & Order	
58	HBO2	Movie	**** The Lionheart (23) Scott Dixon, Michael Andreotti.			**** Moonlight Sonata: Deafness in Three Movements		My Brilliant (N)				The Gilded Age		True Blood	
59	WSBK	Big Bang	Big Bang	WBZ News 8p (N)		News (N)	Living	48 Hours		Flip Side (N)	Flip Side (N)	Big Bang	Housewife	Housewife	Person (N)
60	KTLA	KTLA 5 News at 4 (N)		KTLA 5 News at 5 (N)		News at 6 (N)	KTLA News (N)	News (N)	Unscripted	All American: Homecoming (N)	The Wranglers (N)	News (N)		(:45) Sports (N)	
61	WGN	WGN Evening News (N) Live		All American: Homecoming (N)		The Wranglers (N)		PXN News at Nine (N) Live		News (N) Live	GN Sports (N)	Young Sheldon	Big Bang	Two Half Men	Last Man
62	WPXI	Sports (N)	Big Bang	All American: Homecoming (N)		The Wranglers (N)		PXN11 News at Ten (N)		Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Friends	Two Half Men	Big Bang	Young Sheldon
63	STARZ1W	(:05) **** Diary of a Mad Black Woman (05) Kimberly Elise.		(:05) ***** Scott Pilgrim vs. the World (10) Michael Cera.				**** 10 Things I Hate About You (99)				(:40) Spartacus: Gods		(:40) Party Down	
64	OWN	(4:00) Channel No Longer Available		This channel is no longer available.				Channel No Longer Available		This channel is no longer available.					
93	NGEO	To Catch a Smuggler		To Catch a Smuggler		To Catch a Smuggler (N)		Ibiza Narcos (N)		To Catch a Smuggler		To Catch a Smuggler		Ibiza Narcos	
97	H2	Engineering-World		Proof-There	Proof-There	Dark Marvels		Beyond Oak Island		Proof-There	Proof-There	Dark Marvels		Beyond Oak Island	
99	MYS	NCIS: Los Angeles		JAG		NCIS: New Orleans (N)		Hawaii Five-0		Hawaii Five-0		NCIS		NCIS	
101	MTIME	***** Welcome to Marwen (18) Leslie Mann, Steve Carell.				**** Half Brothers (20) Connor Del Rio, Luis Gerardo Méndez.				***** Welcome to Marwen (18) Leslie Mann, Steve Carell.					
102	ADSM	American Dad!	American Dad!	Bob's Burgers	Bob's Burgers	Family Guy	Family Guy	King of the Hill	King of the Hill	Rick and Morty	Rick and Morty	Chicken	Royal Crackers	Family Guy	Family Guy
103	LIFE	Hawaii Five-0		Hawaii Five-0		Hawaii Five-0		Hawaii Five-0		Hawaii Five-0		Hawaii Five-0		Hawaii Five-0	
110	DOCU	The Knowing (N)		The Knowing (N)		Love Cheats		Love Cheats		The Detectives		Love Cheats		Love Cheats	
115	FAMJR	Fabulous (N)	CareBears	Smurfs/ Smurfs GrizzlyAnd		Mike/ Mike	BraveBun	Justin Time	Fabulous	Chip & Potato	Mike/ Mike	Mike/ Mike	(:40) Caillou	(:10) Caillou	(:40) Chip &
116	WILDB	American Ninja Warrior Junior		Supergirl		Dwight	Afraid?	Afraid?	Goosebumps	Goosebumps	Goosebumps	Johnny Test	Johnny Test	The Deep	The Deep
117	ABCS	The Fosters		8 Simple Rules	Man-Plan	Life in Pieces	Life in Pieces	Fresh-Boat	Fresh-Boat	The Fosters		Good Trouble		Baby Daddy	Baby Daddy
134	AP	Animal Cops: Houston		North Woods Law		Lone Star Law		Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet		The Vet Life		Lone Star Law		North Woods Law	
28	BBCW	Newsday	Business	Newsday	Business	BBC News	Business	BBC News	Somalia	BBC News	HARDtalk	BBC News	Business	BBC News	Business
159	DJV	Will & Grace	Will & Grace	Raymond	Raymond	Taxi	Taxi	Cheers	Cheers	Will & Grace	Will & Grace	Mork & Mindy	Dear John	Taxi	Taxi
143	CNBS	Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank				Capital Connection (N) Live		Squawk Box Europe (N) Live	
144	GOLF	(3:00) Live from the		Road to the Presidents Cup		PGA TOUR (N)	PGA TOUR (N)	Live from the Presidents Cup				PGA TOUR	PGA TOUR	Road to the Presidents Cup	
151	SCH	(:20) **** June Again (21) Claudia Karvan, Noni Hazlehurst.				Almost Unsolved Heists (N)		**** Breaking Olympia: The Phil Heath Story (24)				Almost Uns	(:45) **** Breaking Olympia: The Phil Heath Story		

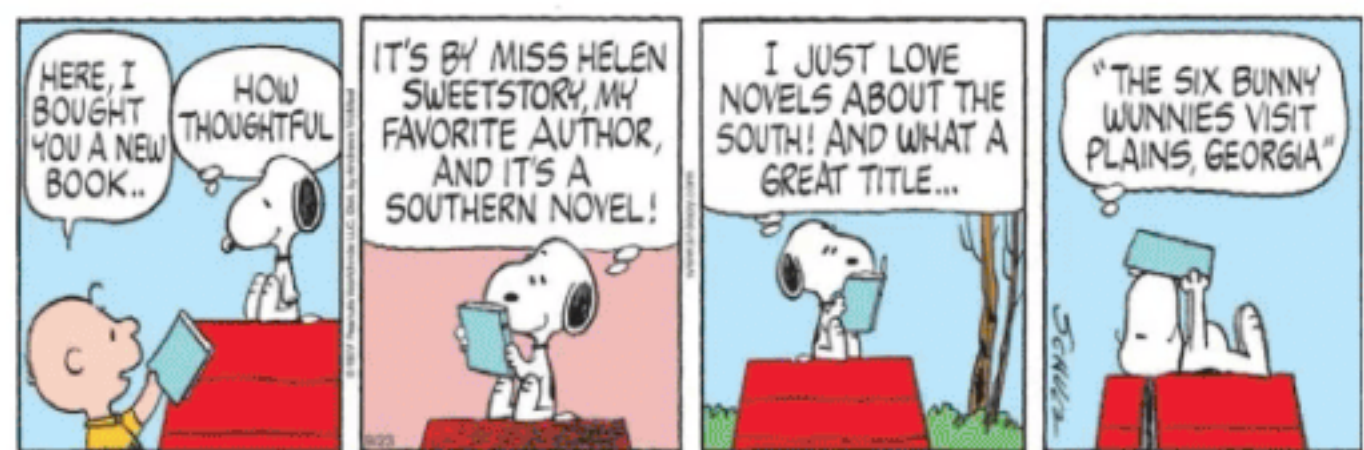
GARFIELD



BIG NATE



PEANUTS



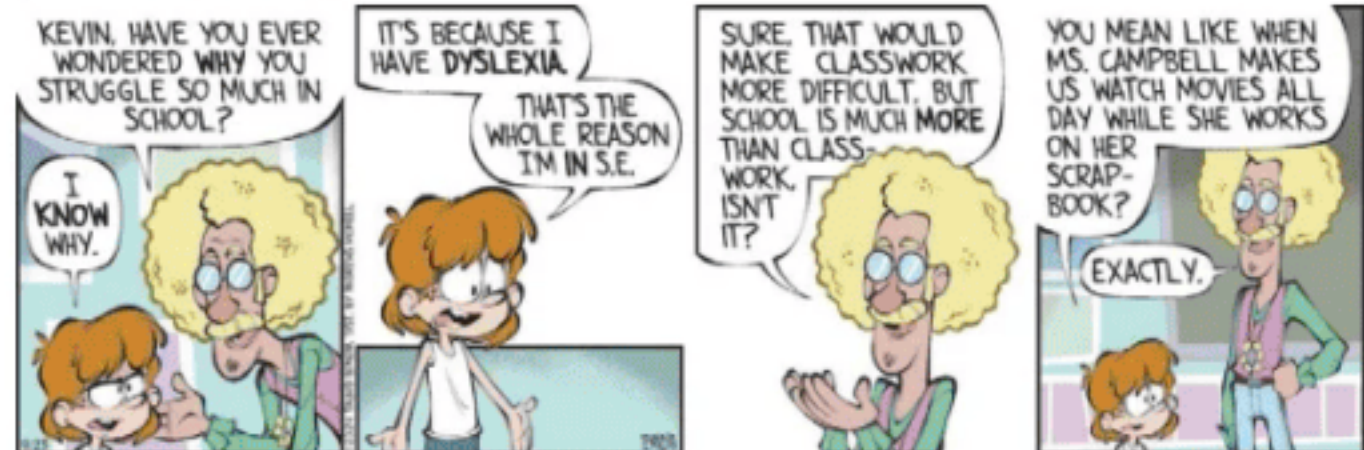
BABY BLUES



PICKLES



CRABGRASS



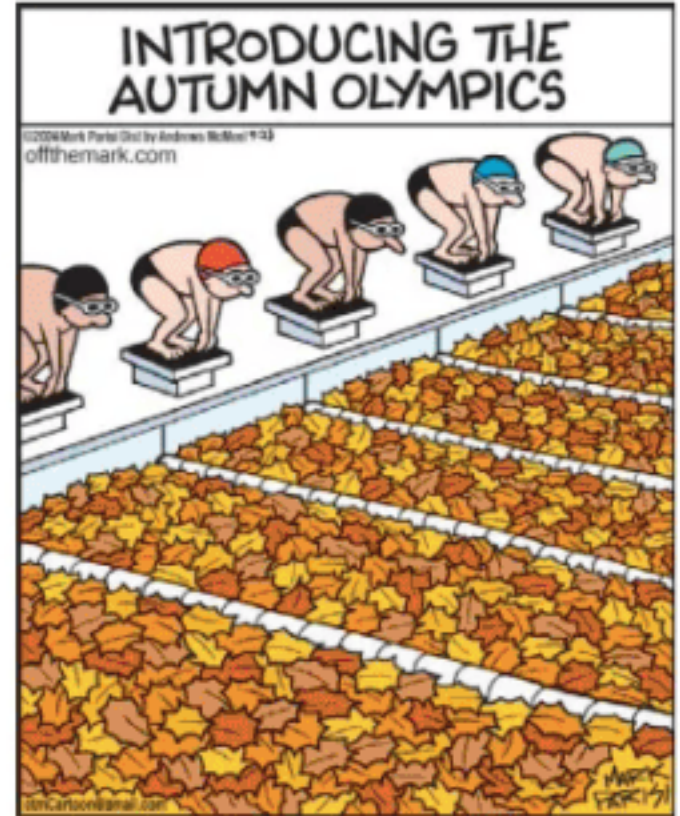
FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE



ROSE IS ROSE



OFF THE MARK



THE ARGYLE SWEATER



CORNERED



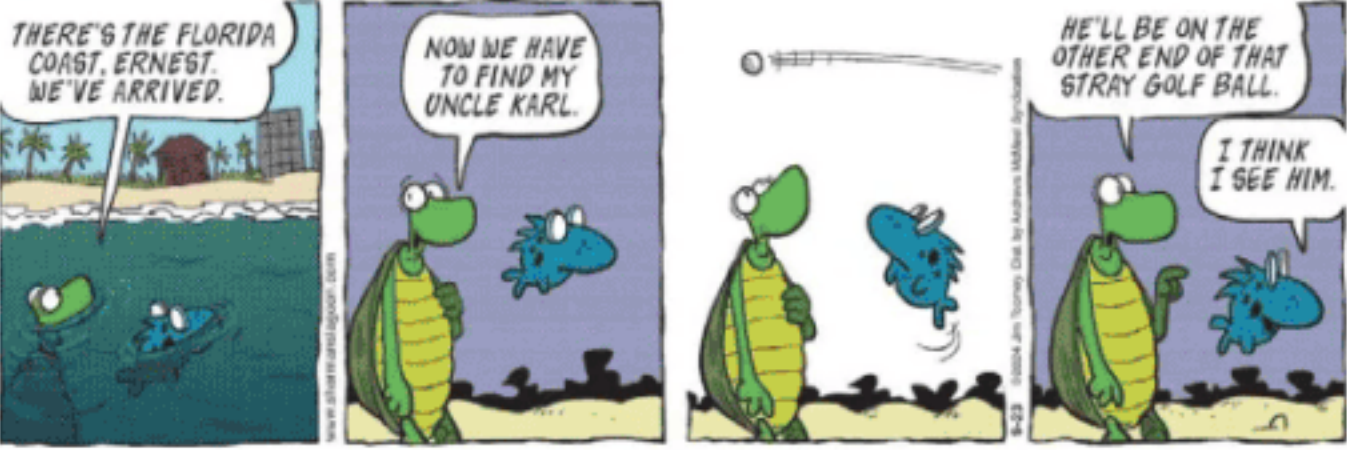
LOOSE PARTS



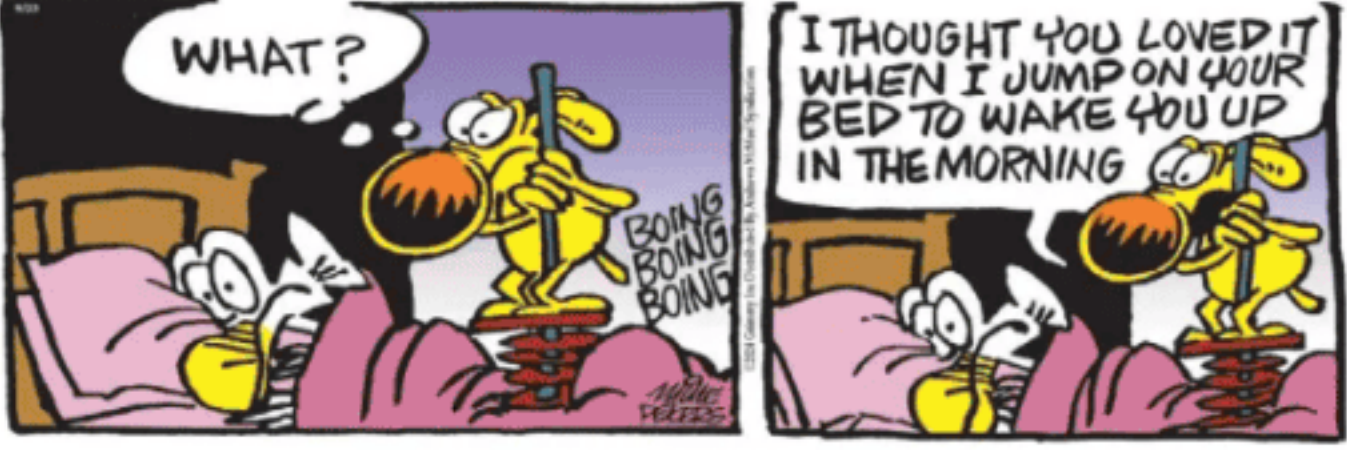
ADAM@HOME



SHERMAN'S LAGOON



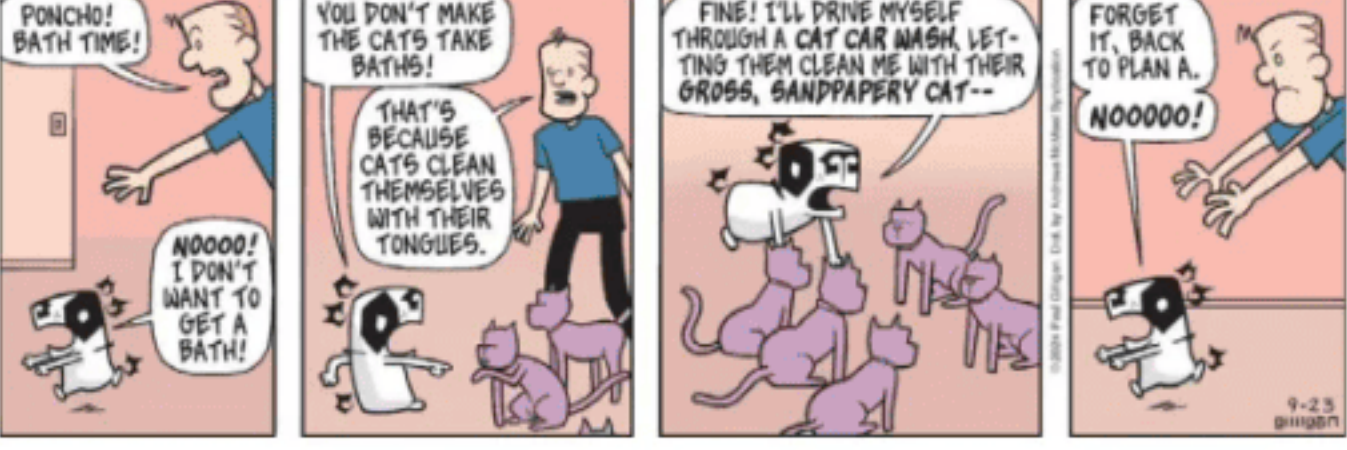
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM



LUANN



POOCH CAFE



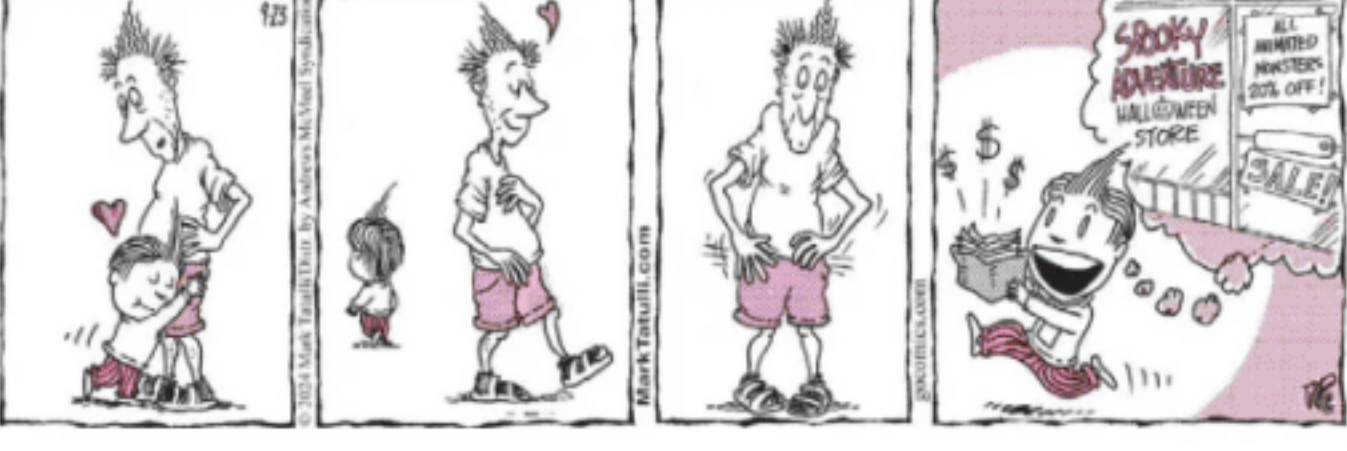
CRANKSHAFT



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



LIO



1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14			15							16				
17										18				
	19				20				21		22			
			23	24			25				26			
27	28	29				30			31	32				33
34				35				36		37				
38				39					40			41		
42			43			44						45		
46					47		48				49			
	50				51	52			53					
54					55			56			57	58	59	
60				61		62				63				64
65						66								
67						68						69		

ACROSS

1 "Noble" conifer
4 ____ and repeat
9 Horned zoo animal
14 Layered dessert named after the Palais Garnier
16 Fabled fable writer
17 Excitement for parenthood inspired by seeing cute infants
18 Not glossy
19 Pops
20 Sandwich shops
22 Suffix for a fundraiser
23 Any of 11 periods on a Taylor Swift tour
25 "Yikes!"
26 "Don't have a cow, ____!"
27 Corporate web connection
31 Banded gemstones
34 ____-Tac Airport
35 Toyota in the lyrics of "50 Ways to Say Goodbye"
37 Decide to join
38 Cathy's cry in comics
39 Nom de plume
41 Eggs on sushi
42 Adler in Sherlock Holmes stories
44 Marks from battle
45 The Jazz, on scoreboards
46 Square dance move
48 Taking some time away

DOWN

- 1 It keeps a watch on you!
- 2 Tablet on which an infant may watch Cocomelon
- 3 "I'm a Survivor" singer McEntire
- 4 British WWII flyers
- 5 Figure skating discipline
- 6 Pews' place
- 7 Bare-bones Halloween attire?
- 8 Spooky
- 9 DownloadMore____.com (meme website claiming to offer computing capacity)

10 Colorful diagram in a
11 weather report
12 "For real?!"
13 No small amount?
14 "I'm an ___ book"
15 Winona of "Stranger
16 Things"
17 Jamaican music
18 genre
19 Spoke gratingly
20 "In case you didn't
21 hear me ..."
22 Summoning of
23 spirits
24 Goes voyaging
25 One, in Berlin
26 Uses, as Abby instead of
27 Abigail
28 Quarterback's ploy
29 Palindromic
30 flatbread
31 Words on some
32 wedding decor
33 "Good job!"
34 Reaction to a punch
35 Oxidizes
36 ___ four (pastry)
37 Accomplishment
38 Little rascals
39 Unhappy cat sound
40 "House of the Dragon"
41 actor D'Arcy
42 Greenpeace or Oxfam, in
43 brief
44 "About ___ big"
45 Snaky fish

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Balance, Ball, Card, Center, Champion, Compete, Control, Corner, Court, Drills, Endurance, Field, Footwork, Forward, Goal, Heading, Indoor, Kick, Line, Motion, Movement, Offensive, Opponent, Pass, Pitch, Position, Possession, Role, Rule, School, Shin Pad, Shoot, Skill, Soccer, Sole, Strategy, Target, Team, Technical, Traction, Training

7		6	8	4		1	2	3
3		9	5	1		7	8	
		8	7	6	3			4
				8				1
			4		7			
2				9				
6			2	7	1	5		
	1	7		3	4	8		2
4	9	2		5	8	3		7

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

12/6 Answers: 1. ACQUITTAL 2. LAUNDROMAT 3. IMPOSSIBLE
4. LENIENT 5. STONE 6. NEEDEY 7. WALKERS

24×		2	15×	6+	
3+	15+			12×	
	3÷			15×	2−
8+		5−			
	1	12×		14+	
1−		10×			1

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4	3	5	2	6	1
5	1	3	4	2	6
3	2	1	6	5	4
1	6	4	5	3	2
2	5	6	1	4	3
6	4	2	3	1	5

[illegible]

7	5	6	8	4	9	1	2	3
3	4	9	5	1	2	7	8	6
1	2	8	7	6	3	9	5	4
9	6	4	3	8	5	2	7	1
8	3	1	4	2	7	6	9	5
2	7	5	1	9	6	4	3	8
6	8	3	2	7	1	5	4	9
5	1	7	9	3	4	8	6	2
4	9	2	6	5	8	3	1	7

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Jump in, participate, meet and greet, go where the action is and make yourself heard. Say yes to change or to setting a course that promises adventure. Restructure your surroundings and routine to serve you better. Don't take a risk with your health or physical well-being. 4 stars

BIRTHDAY BABY:
You are intelligent, creative and entertaining. You are tolerant and verbose.

“Within five to 10 years ... what we’re experiencing right now will be looked back upon as a mild year. We are inevitably in for a rough ride.”
Johan Rockström, climate scientist



People swim during extreme heat at a waterpark that has installed a cover to combat the sunlight in Al Diwaniyah, Iraq in August. Global temperatures between June and August were 1.5 C (2.7 F) above the pre-industrial average, according to the Copernicus Climate Change Service. SALWAN GEORGES/THE WASHINGTON POST

THE HEAT IS ON!

SARAH KAPLAN

As floodwaters coursed through Texas and Taiwan, as mosquito-borne viruses spread across the Americas, as lethal heat struck down children on hikes and grandparents on pilgrimage, the world’s average temperature this summer soared to the highest level in record history, according to new data from Europe’s top climate agency.

Global temperatures between June and August were 1.5 C (2.7 F) above the pre-industrial average, according to the Copernicus Climate Change Service — just edging out the previous record set last summer. The sweltering season reached its apex in late July, when Copernicus’s sophisticated temperature analysis program detected the four hottest days ever recorded.

Meanwhile, temperatures for the year to date have far exceeded anything seen in the agency’s more than 80 years of record-keeping, making it all but certain that 2024 will be the hottest year known to science.

To Copernicus director Carlo Buontempo, the onslaught of broken records is sobering but not surprising. Humanity continues to burn fossil fuels at an ever-increasing pace, and the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is higher than the world has seen in roughly three million years, according to the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

“If you keep doing the same thing, you cannot expect to get any different result,” Buontempo said. “Unless we limit greenhouse gases we will only see an exacerbation of these temperatures.”

This summer came on the heels of an unprecedented year-long stretch in which Earth’s temperature repeatedly met or exceeded 1.5C above the pre-industrial average — a threshold scientists say the world cannot surpass if it hopes to avoid the worst consequences of climate change. The scorching

Here’s what the hottest summer on Earth looked like



Spectators try to cool themselves off with water misters at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris in July. The world’s average temperature this summer soared to record levels. JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST

conditions were the product of a complex cocktail of human-caused climate change and a strong El Niño event — a natural phenomenon characterized by warm temperatures in the Pacific Ocean.

Though this El Niño was declared over in June, huge amounts of energy remained trapped in the Earth system, Buontempo said, fuelling the summer’s extraordinary temperatures.

The consequences were felt by people on every continent, from world-class athletes competing at the Paris Olympics to refugees fleeing from wars. Wildfires fuelled by heat and drought raged through the Brazilian Pantanal, a vital wetland known to store vast amounts of carbon. A turbocharged monsoon triggered landslides that killed hundreds of people in India’s Kerala state. The Atlantic Ocean saw its earliest Category 5 hurricane on record, while deadly floods have wreaked havoc from Italy to Pakistan to Nigeria to China.

It was a summer of unrelenting humidity and heat too extreme for the human body to withstand. In June, at least 1,300 pilgrims visiting the Muslim holy city of Mecca died amid temperatures of 50 C (122 F).

Another 125 people were reported dead in Mexico during a July streak of exceedingly hot nights that researchers say was made 200 times as likely because of climate change.

And in the Arctic Archipelago of Svalbard, one of the world’s northernmost inhabited areas, August temperatures soared more than 2.5 C (4.5 F) above the previous record.

Nearly 7,000 weather stations in the United States broke daily temperature records between June 1 and Aug. 31, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The heat has been blamed for dozens of fatalities, including those of a motorcyclist riding in Death Valley, an infant on a boat trip in Arizona and a California man who collapsed inside his un-air-conditioned home. In Maricopa County, Ariz. — one of the

few jurisdictions to methodically track and report on the problem — officials have attributed at least 177 deaths this year to heat-related causes.

Some of the most unusual heat this summer occurred in Antarctica, where plumes of warm air disrupted the deep freeze of the six-month polar night. Temperatures on the continent spiked above usual levels, and the surrounding sea ice shrank to nearly unprecedented lows.

The changes in Antarctica are especially eye-opening, Buontempo said, because the region has historically been isolated from the rest of the warming planet by a strong polar vortex and the swirling Southern Ocean.

But since 2023, the extent of sea ice around Antarctica has been about one million to two million square kilometres less than in any year since satellite observations began.

“This is very different from what we have seen in the past,” Buontempo said. “Even people working on sea ice are puzzled by the extent and the rapidity of the decline.”

When Earth’s four hottest days were recorded in July, climate scientist Johan Rockström said that the planet was probably the warmest it has been since the last ice age began more than 100,000 years ago. Climate clues contained in ice cores, lake sediments and tree rings show that global temperatures are shifting out of the range they’ve occupied for most of human history.

“We’re scratching 1.5 (degrees above pre-industrial), and we’ve experienced how it hurts the economy, people and societies across the entire world,” said Rockström, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research.

“But within five to 10 years ... what we’re experiencing right now will be looked back upon as a mild year,” he added. “We are inevitably in for a rough ride.”

The Washington Post



Friends watch a PowerPoint party presentation by host Philip Mayer at the Tight Five Pub in Washington, D.C., earlier this month. PHOTOS: CRAIG HUDSON/FOR WASHINGTON POST

JANAY KINGSBERRY

Washington, D.C., consultant Seamus O'Neill stood before an attentive audience and cleared his throat. "Some of you may be wondering how rats got to D.C.," he began. "Like most residents, rats came to D.C. for work."

The crowd laughed, as O'Neill, 24, continued in earnest. "You may think I am joking," he said. "But indeed rats are very resourceful creatures, and they have followed humans wherever we have gone for millennia."

As O'Neill spoke, slides of a PowerPoint presentation flashed across the screens of mounted TVs around the room, visualizing his arguments with graphs and short bullet points: How rats became more interconnected through the Silk Road and trade routes. How they carried the bubonic plague, wiping out between 30 and 60 per cent of the population of almost every country between China and Portugal. How some of these rodents found fame (including Remy from Ratatouille and Stuart Little). How he calculated the rat-to-human ratio in D.C. (allegedly 3:2) and it was worse than New York City's (allegedly 1:2). And how he imagined the media (including this publication) would craft their headlines "if they covered the rat issue with the level of attention and analytical analysis that it truly deserves."

O'Neill wasn't addressing a neighbourhood town hall. Or city council members. Or a Tomcat boardroom. He was speaking to a group of about 20 or so bar-goers huddled over beers and half-priced burgers at a pub in Adams Morgan in D.C.

In recent months, O'Neill and other locals have convened at Tight Five Pub to deliver presentations about their niche interests, hidden pastimes and hot takes. That July night, his "Oh, Rats" slide show was accompanied by another presenter's pitch deck on how he ghosted his girlfriend and started a new dating app; a guide to impressions in French; a math lecture on infinite sets; and a thorough breakdown of what might have happened if Richard M. Nixon had defeated John F. Kennedy in 1960.

"It's nice to take a load off after work," O'Neill said. "It's basically a free comedy show, and maybe you'll learn something too."

PowerPoints have long dredged up flashbacks of dull meetings and interminable briefings, with some even calling for the presentation software to be banned. But it's got a makeover in recent years, with millennials and Gen Zers repurposing the software for social entertainment: A workplace and educational tool by day has become a zany social game by night. Even PowerPoint's developer, Microsoft, has co-signed the trend — offering a party template that participants can download (though some users are turning to its rival tools like Canva and Google Slides) and imparting advice for creating a presentation. "Make it more visually appealing — this isn't your Father's PowerPoint," notes Mic-

A CASE IN POINT

Early computer technology looks to be making a comeback in social circles of all places



Friends share a laugh during the Oh, Rats PowerPoint presentation.

"I think the fun part of a PowerPoint presentation is that it's a topic you probably wouldn't or shouldn't present about in a lot of contexts."

rosoft's site. Indeed, a scroll through #powerpointnight TikTok uncovers thousands of unconventional, unhinged and unserious slide shows presented at different parties. There's Men I Talked About in Therapy. And How My Friends Would Undoubtedly Die in The Hunger Games. Others are thematic, such as a PowerPoint night to finally figure out what all your friends do for work. Pitch a Friend lets presenters create slide decks to help their single pals find potential matches in the crowd. Brand accounts, of course, hardly ever miss an opportunity to weigh in. "Topics are a solid," Canva commented on one viral post. On another, Microsoft wrote: "We love a Pedro (Pascal) PowerPoint (even though y'all used Google (crying smile emoji))"



An attendee prepares a deck for PowerPoint night.

In more intentional moments, users have turned to the software for planning friend group trips, celebrating bachelorette parties, persuading their parents to let a friend sleep over or buy them Taylor Swift tour tickets, coming out to their family members or revealing their job as a stripper. PowerPoint even played a role in Sydney Sweeney's booming career: The actress revealed she once made a slide show to persuade her parents to move from Spokane, Wash., to Los Angeles.

The concept was first documented in 2012 when three engineering students at Ontario's University of Waterloo started a party called "Drink Talk Learn (DTL)." It quickly spread to other cities including Toronto, Seattle, San Francisco, Edmonton and New York, one participant told BuzzFeed.

The pandemic, which compelled friends to leverage workplace software tools for social engagement, gave it another boost. As Zoom

happy hours persisted, PowerPoint presentations emerged, allowing hosts to rant, inform, explain, reveal or geek out about a topic or event of their choosing.

"In the 'Zoom times,' I felt like I was presenting a lot," said Jaibin Mathew, 23.

During the event in Adams Morgan, Mathew gave a vibrant '70s-themed Canva presentation, explaining why everyone should be wearing Silly Bandz — rubber bracelets in various shapes and colours that were especially popular among kids in the early 2010s. At one point, he playfully suggested that everyone embrace microplastics in their lives.

"I have many plastics — I wear them on my arms," he said. "I hope they reach into my bloodstream."

Growing up, Mathew always found PowerPoint to be stressful, recounting a particularly difficult seventh-grade slide show he made about J. Robert Oppenheimer. But in the context of social settings, he

appreciates how they allow him to connect with other people.

On the night he gave his Silly Bandz presentation, he didn't know a single person at the bar. But after presenting, he met a handful of locals and even gave away a few bracelets he had brought with him.

"I think (the PowerPoints) are a really fun social lubricant because then they know something about you that they can ask you about," Mathew said later in a phone interview. "And then it's like a really great conversation starter."

Users say that what makes PowerPoint a fun format for social activities is how easily the tool can be subverted, inspiring them to rewrite the rules of presentation etiquette and dream up NSFW topics that satirize the stuffy settings from which they originated.

"I think the fun part of a PowerPoint presentation is that it's a topic you probably wouldn't or shouldn't present about in a lot of contexts," Mathew said. "It's the way a lot of fun performances are — it's just turning something normal on its head."

The structural nature of PowerPoints (distilling research into short bullet notes and key findings) can also weed out some of the clumsy and awkward aspects of regular social conversation — where folks can stumble over words, lose their train of thought and excitedly talk over one another. With PowerPoint parties, it gives everyone the chance to have the floor without distractions or interruptions — save for the outbursts of cheers and laughter.

Philip Mayer, a transportation researcher and former teacher, began hosting D.C.'s event at Tight Five Pub in May (though the venue has changed to Johnny Pistola's on the first Wednesday of every month after Tight Five Pub abruptly shuttered its doors).

As a former middle school and high school teacher, Mayer, 40, would make presentations for his students. During the pandemic when schools were migrating to online classrooms, Mayer would kick off his hybrid lessons with a quick "cool thing of the day" slide deck, thrilling students with fun facts about Soviet vending machines or the ravens of the Tower of London.

"Fortunately, it was good at getting people to show up on time," he said. "Unfortunately, a lot of people would just login, watch the cool thing of the day and then log out."

Mayer even showed one to his date when he participated in Washington Post's Date Lab series in 2020. "Some people were like 'don't do that — that's the worst thing you possibly could do'" he said. "But she was into it, and people in the comments liked it a lot."

In D.C., where Mayer says there's a huge appetite for trivia and standup comedy, PowerPoint Night is the perfect marriage of both of them.

"I just need people to understand that we're not doing, like, quarterly sales reports with the participants."

Washington Post*